

THE TIMES 1785-1985 Tomorrow

The Italian job Woodrow Wyatt on the lesson for Britain from Italy's black marketeers All at sea The loneliness of the long-distance yachtswomen Hot spots The Times Guide to tempting temperatures world-wide Cold warrior Snow suits, cocoons and other clothes to beat the freeze

Portfolio The Times Portfolio competition prize of £2,000 was won yesterday by Mr A. Baggis, who lives in London. Portfolio list, page 18; how to play, Information Service, back page.

Prince and Princess at Times gala

The Prince and Princess of Wales are to be guests of honour at a spectacular anniversary gala evening at Hampton Court Palace on July 11 to celebrate the Bicentenary of The Times. The royal couple will join 600 distinguished figures from all walks of British life in what will be one of the highlights of the newspaper's 200th birthday year. As already announced, the Queen is to tour the offices and printing plant of The Times on February 28.

Sterling hit The pound dropped 98 points to \$1,330 after trading at \$1,430 after yesterday's unexpected, with turnover later down, that Nigeria was about to leave the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Page 15

Royal visitors Princess Margaret, recovering in Brodipon Hospital after a lung operation, received her first visitors last night, her children Lord Linley and Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones.

Gas decision Armed Forces pressure for the creation of a British stockpile of nerve gas was rejected by a Cabinet committee last August, government sources have said. Page 2

Gibraltar talks British and Spanish officials began talks in a friendly atmosphere at La Linea to prepare for next month's full opening of the Gibraltar frontier. Page 8

Ramphal's task Mr Shridath Ramphal, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, is understood to be preparing an initiative to reduce tension in Sri Lanka. Page 6

Sobers equalled Ravi Shastri, the Indian cricketer whose slow scoring infuriated spectators last week, equalled Garry Sobers's world record when he hit six sixes off one over in Bombay. Page 20

Times magazine Limited numbers of copies of The Times Bicentenary colour magazine are now available to those who were unable to obtain a copy on January 7. Because of the unprecedented demand, only single copies can be supplied to each reader, on receipt of payment to cover cost, post and packing. Orders should be met within 14 days. A coupon appears on page 2.

Leader page 13 Letters: On Budget plans, from Mr H. R. Cole; art colleges, from Mr N. McKamey; Leading articles: Social trends; Nicaragua; Electric cars Features, pages 10-12 Ballot money divides the TUC; Dilemmas in the Horn of Africa; Thatcher: convictions or assumptions?; A literary family; Atlantic City loses a gambler Obituary, page 14 Sir Lindsay Wellington, Anton Karas Classified, pages 19, 22-24 Business to Business; Legal; Cars Home News 2-5; Law Report 14 Overseas 6-8; Motoring 23 Agony 14, 16, 17; Puzzles 4 Arts 9; Science 16 Business 15-19; Snow reports 24 Chess 6; Sport 20-22 Court 14; TV & Radio 25 Crossword 26; Theatres, etc 26 Diary 12; Weather 25

NUM chiefs vote to expel defiant Notts area

Working miners in the Nottinghamshire coalfield are to be expelled from the National Union of Mineworkers unless they accept the authority of the union's national executive. It voted yesterday by 17 votes to four to recommend to a special delegate conference on January 29 that at 30,000-strong traditionally-moderate coalfield should be thrown out for changing its rules to become an independent union with a president. Mr Arthur Scargill, the union president, argued yesterday that by so doing they had turned themselves into a "speciality-management union" of the non-political kind formed after the 1926 general strike by a local MP, George Spencer. Unless the miners in the moderate coalfield recant and change their union rules back again the expulsion process will be set in train. And although a legal challenge to the decision is confidently if gloomily awaited, most NUM leaders are adamant that the painful verdict must be carried out. Moderate areas joined the left in taking the decision, although four area leaders were opposed to it: Mr Trevor Bell, of the white-collar section, Coxa; Mr Ted Mackay of North Wales; Mr Ken Ison, of South Derbyshire; and Mr Jack Jones, of Leicestershire. Most of their members, like the Nottinghamshire miners, are working in defiance of the national strike. Mr Ray Chadburn, president, and Mr Henry Richardson, secretary, of the Nottinghamshire area abstained in the vote. The unprecedented disciplinary action is being taken under the union's national rule 40, which lays down that if an area refuses to adopt the model rules it may be "excluded from the union by resolution of conference and upon such resolution being passed all the members of the union shall automatically cease to be members". Yesterday's decision was greeted with jubilation by about 100 strikers from the moderate coalfields, who lobbed the meeting wearing "Expel the scabs" badges, although they argued that the expulsion should have been immediate. If the disciplinary action goes ahead, the union will set up a new organization in the coalfield, probably splitting it into north and south Nottinghamshire areas, as disclosed in The Times yesterday. The existing offices in Berry Hill, Mansfield, are the property of the area and might have to be abandoned. Final figures for steel production in Britain during 1984, published today, show that the miners' strike has had minimal impact. Steel output was 15.14 million tonnes, a rise of 0.8 per cent on the previous year. A letter setting out a three-point plan for peace in the coal industry has been sent to Mr Peter Walker, Secretary of State for Energy, by the British Council of Churches. NUM assets, page 2

Rail stoppage

The 24-hour rail stoppage planned for next Thursday is to go ahead, Aslef, the train drivers' union, and the National Union of Railwaymen, confirmed yesterday. The London to Edinburgh route and the service from London through Derby, Nottingham and Sheffield, as well as commuter services round these towns, could be halted, but no passenger services in the capital are expected to be affected. Southern Region should not be hit. made it clear that they want to get back to the negotiating table. The executive welcomed the activities of various third parties - including the churches, the TUC and the Labour Party - in seeking a resumption of talks to end the three-month deadlock in negotiations, but signalled continuing adherence to the union's hard-line demand for withdrawal of the March 6, 1984 colliery closure programme. The board last night spurned the peace overtures from the miners' union, arguing that it would not be worthwhile restarting negotiations unless the union first dropped its demand that there could be no pit closures on economic grounds. The board has made it plain for many weeks that it will not go back into talks until the union accepts in advance of such discussions that there must be an economic factor in the decisions about prolonging the life of collieries. The executive vote to expel the Nottinghamshire "dissidents" is certain to be carried out if the working miners there fail to take advantage of the three-week breathing space to abandon their defiance of the national union.

Chief's salary up 70% as profits soar

Salaries had been fixed by a committee of the corporation's non-executive directors. They had been designed to take into account what was equitable for a publicly-quoted company of Telecom's size. The spokesman said that Sir George's salary was still significantly lower than that paid to the chairman or chief executives of private sector companies such as British Oxygen, Standard Telephones and Cables or Cable and Wireless. It was also in line with the comment in the prospectus at the time of the share sale that BT's directors would be given "substantial salary increases on order to bring them into line with those paid by other commercial companies". The scale and timing of the increases were immediately attacked as "scandalous" by Opposition MPs. Mr Alan Williams, a Labour party spokesman on trade and indus-

Big pay rises at Telecom

try, said: "It is beyond belief that they should be so insensitive as to push through the increases so soon after the bonanza that was given to shareholders in the flotation." According to British Telecom's last report and accounts, Sir George was paid a salary of £84,000 in the 1983-84 financial year. According to the prospectus, his total pay package last year was worth £94,000 at the end of last year. His new salary will run for 18 months. Yesterday Telecom shares rose 5p to 120p each in their partly-paid form, well over double the price of 50p which investors were asked to pay for them in the flotation. Mr Alan Chamberlain, secretary of the British Telecom Union committee, contrasted the chairman's salary increase with the pay rise of just over 5 per cent awarded to British Telecom's 240,000 employees last summer. Tempus, page 17

Commons completes the Tebbit convalescence

half-hour's re-immersion in his natural element seemed to swell and colour like a bowl of winter bulbs brought from a dark cupboard into the daylight. A month ago, and two months after the Brighton bombing, John Wakeham, the Government Chief Whip, hobbled in on his crutches to a crowded chamber personifying (in Mr Roy Hattersley's phrase) the triumph of democracy over terrorism. Yesterday with many members not yet back from the recess, Norman Tebbit came

US space plans still sour accord

The United States and the Soviet Union appear to be far more seriously divided over President Reagan's "Star Wars" research programme for space-based weapons than was apparent in statements by the superpowers after their arms talks in Geneva. While both sides were anxious to emerge with an agreement to open substantive arms talks, the problem of future negotiations on America's five-year, \$26 billion (£23 billion) research programme into anti-missile weapons based in space - properly called the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) - continues to sour the atmosphere behind the scenes. US officials concede that the most difficult issue in the 14 hours of talks between Mr George Shultz, the Secretary of State, and Mr Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister, was the question of negotiations about the military aspects of space. The SDI programme has been put forward for negotiation in the forthcoming US-Soviet talks, but the Administration has offered no prospect of agreeing to curtail its current research stage. President Reagan also made it clear in so many words at his press conference on Wednesday night that the United States is unwilling to consider negotiating any agreement on limiting the possible future testing and deployment of space-based weapons that may be developed as a result of the research programme. Administration officials made it clear that the test and deployment of futuristic space weapons should be left to a future President, since there is little likelihood that any will be ready for deployment before the end of the century. The Soviet position appears to be that while Star Wars is to be on the negotiating table, Washington seems to be saying in effect that it is not negotiable. Mr Shultz and Mr Gromyko agreed in general terms to negotiate on "preventing an arms race in space" without specifically mentioning the SDI. Washington expects the negotiations - which will also cover strategic nuclear arms and medium-range missiles - to begin around March. The United States has privately proposed Geneva as the venue. The fact that Mr Shultz and Mr Gromyko did not define the areas to be covered in the talks on space-based arms suggests there was disagreement on how the SDI should be negotiated. Mr Shultz, emphasizing that it was a personal view, told reporters on the flight home from Geneva that space negotiations would address "space arms, whether based or targeted on earth or in space". To the American side that definition includes Soviet development of earth-based anti-ballistic missiles. Geoffrey Smith, page 6 New breakthrough, page 6

Five dead after blast rips flats

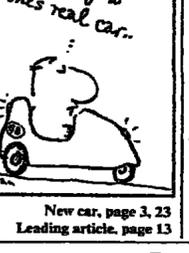


Firemen struggling to rescue victims of the gas blast at the block of flats in Putney Hill, south London, yesterday. (Photograph: John Manning)

At least five people died and seven were injured, one seriously, when a gas explosion ripped the centre out of a three-storey block of flats at Putney, south-west London, yesterday. Page 2 One woman, Miss Eva Krejci, was rescued after being buried under rubble for six hours. A surgeon crawled through a tunnel made by rescuers so he could administer aid. Back page The Health and Safety Executive launched an inquiry into the cause of the blast, which was heard three miles away. It was believed to have been caused by a mains gas leak. Page 2 Residents in flats nearby were thrown from their beds, bricks and shredded timber were flung hundreds of yards down Putney Hill and scores of windows were shattered by the explosion. Page 2

Castro arrives for Ortega inauguration

Managua (AP) - President Fidel Castro of Cuba arrived in Managua yesterday under heavy security to attend the inauguration of Senor Daniel Ortega as President of Nicaragua. "I am happy to be in Nicaragua and I salute the Nicaraguan people", were Dr Castro's only comments to the press at the airport. Although his visit had been widely rumoured, the Nicaraguan Government had made no mention of his possible arrival. Ortega's big day, page 6



New car, page 3, 23 Leading article, page 13

The Cathedral alone took 43,435 days to complete. And most of those were in the 12th century. Peterborough has been important since Roman times, giving it the kind of charm that only comes with 2,000 years of natural growth. Today it's continuing to develop at a



human pace, whilst keeping up with modern needs. The brand new shopping centre, Queensgate, is widely considered to be England's finest. New facilities include England's biggest ice-rink, a tennis centre with hotel and a 1,000 metre rowing course. Find out how your business can enjoy the next 2,000 years in Peterborough. Return the coupon, or call Joan South on Peterborough (0733) 68931.

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Putney gas explosion

Five killed as three-storey block of flats collapses after blast

By Staff Reporters

At least five people died and seven were taken to hospital after a gas explosion demolished the core of a three-storey block of flats in south London yesterday.

Last night, firemen were digging, with the aid of floodlights, through tons of rubble for another resident.

The noise of the early morning explosion at Newnham House, Manor Fields, off Putney Hill, could be heard more than three miles away.

Occupants of flats near by were thrown from their beds, bricks and shredded timber were flung hundreds of yards down the hill and scores of windows in surrounding buildings were shattered in the blast, which one senior fire officer compared to that of a 50lb bomb.

The three floors of the elegant 1930s building collapsed into a pile of debris 10 feet high from which firemen gradually drew the dead and injured, who were taken to St Mary's Hospital, Roehampton, where an emergency plan, devised in the wake of the bombing of the Grand Hotel at Brighton, was in operation.

Six and a half hours after the explosion firemen and surgeons pulled from the tangle of wood and masonry a young woman who had been protected beneath tons of rubble by the cast iron bath she had been standing beside at 7.17am when the gas ignited. It ignited after what is believed to have been a large and rapid leak from the mains supply.

The leak was discovered by Mr Gerrit Gellissen, warden of the Manor Fields Estate, who arrived for work about 6am. "I went to deliver a parcel shortly before 7am to the Krelj sisters who are residents in the block. One of the sisters opened the door and asked me if I smelt gas. It was obvious and very strong."

"I went back to the office, but before I had the chance to ring the gas board I heard the bang. "I ran out. It was still dark, just chaos with debris everywhere and people standing around crying." There were two telephone warnings of the smell of gas, but the explosion happened before gas officials arrived.

The explosion was witnessed by Ian Connors, aged 15, who was delivering newspapers in the street. He was knocked from his bicycle. "There was a blue flash and an explosion. It

seemed like the trees were disintegrating." He left hospital after treatment for minor injuries.

People sleeping in flats near by were jolted awake.

"I heard a massive explosion. I was thrown out of bed and my bookcase fell on top of me," said Miss Sally Plumb, aged 14, who lives in Hayward Gardens.

"I thought a bomb had gone off. I rushed outside and saw that the block next door had simply

and a toppled lift shaft swayed precariously above them, but they could not risk knocking it down until they were sure that all those who might be alive had been extricated.

An added difficulty in the early hours of the rescue was that the mains gas supply could not be cut to the area.

Communications by short-wave radio were banned in case the sets sparked off a further ignition.

Mr Alan Sharpe, a spokesman for the South Eastern Gas Board, said that the gas mains were probably as old as the 1930s building but that they had been checked for safety during the last two years when the flats switched from communal oil-fired heating to individual gas central heating.

Mr David Mellor, Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office and Conservative MP for Putney, who lives near by, arrived at the flats early in the day. "Having seen the Brighton bomb at the Grand Hotel I can say that this looks even worse", he said.

An investigation will be held by the Health and Safety Executive, said its chairman, Mr John Collen, after inspecting the site.

Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Employment, has ordered an urgent preliminary report from the Health and Safety Executive into the explosion (Robert Evans writes).

Mr King went out of his way, however, during exchanges with MPs to stress the good safety record of the gas industry.

When asked by Mr John Prescott, Labour's chief employment spokesman, if the HSE would examine the extent of gas explosions during the past five years, he said it was worth remembering there were now 16 million gas consumers in Britain, but 1984 saw only 25 serious explosions.

"These figures show a steady declining trend over the last three years and bare some indication of generally the very high standards of safety operated within the gas industry," Mr King added.

But he declined to comment on claims, voiced by Mr Simon Hughes, Liberal MP for Bermondsey, that there had been a failure in recent weeks at Putney to deal quickly and properly with complaints made about the gas service.

While they did so the second floor landing, parts of the roof

collapsed. I saw a man with his baby standing by a window. There was no way I could get in to try to help. Everything between was just rubble."

Mr and Mrs Michael Ashcroft were injured when, after hearing the explosion, they gathered up their daughter aged three and rushed through their front door. The blast had demolished the landing and they fell to the rubble beneath.

They were not seriously injured, although Mr Ashcroft was being kept in hospital overnight with concussion.

When firemen arrived the rubble had settled and no bodies, living or dead, were visible. They used a heat detecting camera with a thermal image intensifier to locate those trapped below.

Because of the site's delicacy they could not use mechanical equipment and dug with shovels and bare hands.

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Peter Brooks

"These leaks are getting on my nerves."

Chemical weapons Nerve gas 100 times as lethal as Bhopal

By Anthony Bevins, Political Correspondent

Armed Forces pressure for the creation of a British stockpile of nerve gas was rejected by a Cabinet committee last August, senior government sources disclosed last night.

A partial leak of information on the meeting, in this week's *New Statesman*, provoked considerable consternation and anger in Whitehall because of its mixture of hard fact and "mythological misrepresentation".

The *New Statesman* said that "the committee has not yet taken any formal decisions," but that "Mrs Thatcher is on the point of forcing through a decision that Britain should restart production of nerve gases".

It was authoritatively stated last night that ministers had discussed the issue of chemical warfare on August 2, but they had decided that there should be no change of policy for the foreseeable future.

One member of the committee said that the matter was "dead". Another said that it was closed.

The committee, chaired by Mrs Thatcher, included Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Foreign Secretary, and Mr Leon Brittan, Home Secretary, with Lord Whitelaw, Leader of the Lords, and Mr John Biffen, Leader of the Commons.

In the Commons yesterday, Mrs Thatcher told one of her own backbenchers, who had expressed concern, Mr Cyril Townsend, MP for Bexleyheath: "Britain abandoned its chemical warfare capability in the late 1950s. There has been no change in government policy since then, nor is any change now proposed".

She then added the key qualification: "But as a responsible Government we have a duty to keep defence policy under review in the light of the massive Soviet capability in chemical weapons".

Parliament, page 4

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

The killing power of the nerve gases which might be used in chemical warfare is as much as 100 times as lethal as the toxic cloud that claimed more than 2,000 lives in Bhopal, India, by accident last month.

The chemical armaments available to the superpowers now are at least 30 times more certain to kill than phosgene, used first by the Germans in 1916, which in turn was six times more deadly than chlorine, introduced by Germany in trench warfare in 1915.

Nerve gases are stored as liquids which can be exploded from missiles as clouds of vapour or sprays of liquid droplets. They enter the body by inhalation or by absorption through the skin.

Death occurs within a few minutes from asphyxia, or a few hours if the victim has some protection or the dose is only marginally lethal.

Today's chemical weapons

and such pesticides as were manufactured in Bhopal, are both close relatives of organo-phosphorous compounds, first developed in Germany in the mid-1930s during research on insecticides. But they are much more deadly.

Since the Second War the chemical weapons manufactured and stored in the United States and, it is assumed, in the Soviet Union, are known as tabun, sarin, soman and VX.

Sarin and VX are the two standard American nerve gases, while soman is believed to be the Soviet equivalent. Tabun is an older relative of sarin.

A former British Army expert on the subject said yesterday: "The point where they were lethal enough for military purposes was reached 20 or 30 years ago. The efforts since then have gone into improving the packaging and delivery systems which transport them to the enemy."

Journalists' pay strike threatened

More than 8,000 provincial journalists are being urged to join a campaign of pay strikes, culminating in an all out stoppage in protest at a 5 per cent pay rise offer.

The National Union of Journalists' provincial newspapers industrial council has convened a 200-member delegate conference next Monday which will be called on to approve a 24-hour strike on January 30, a three-day strike starting on February 4 and an indefinite strike from February 11.

Hopes rose last night that fundamental industrial problems at the *Financial Times* might be at the centre of talks due to reconvene today at the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service.

Management at *The News*, Portsmouth's evening newspaper, yesterday threatened to dismiss next week 73 members of the National Union of Journalists who have opposed plans to transfer three NGA members to sub-editors duties.

Fears of grain market collapse as stocks mount

Fears of a collapse in the grain market, bringing pressure on the European Economic Community to reduce intervention guarantees and to introduce production quotas, have been fuelled by a remorseless build-up in unsold stocks.

There are now more than two million tonnes of feed wheat in intervention storage in Britain, compared with less than 3,000 tonnes last year.

According to the latest figures issued by the Home Grown Cereals Authority, total unsold stocks of wheat and barley held on farms at the end of October amounted to more than 11 million tonnes, nearly 30 per cent more than at the same time in 1983.

Spot prices for wheat and barley are fluctuating considerably and yesterday rose to £114 and £116 a tonne respectively. Futures market prices for delivery next September are less than £100.

Private health insurance

5,750 jobs lost in three days

By Edward Townsend, Industrial Correspondent

Thousands of job losses, the bulk of them in the bread industry, were announced yesterday, bringing the three-day total to almost 6,000.

After Michelin's decision on Tuesday to make 2,400 redundant at its Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, tyre plant, Rank Hovis McDougall announced that 1,800 jobs would go with the closure this year of more bakeries around the country.

In other announcements the Littlewoods organization said that about 1,000 full-time jobs would disappear, and some of its 108 chain stores were threatened with closure, the Ministry of Defence said that 300 civilians would be made redundant at records and pay offices in York; and the British

Steel Corporation announced the closure of a plate mill at Hartlepool with 250 jobs lost.

RHM said that its British Bakeries subsidiary would close plants at Scarborough and Gosport in June, and later it would disclose closure plans at Stockton, Worthing, Eastbourne, Newton Abbot, and West Drayton.

The planned redundancies at the Michelin factory were accepted yesterday by the 29 shop stewards representing production workers, to protect the remaining 2,000 production jobs. The announcement was made by Mr Gordon Howie, works convenor.

Meanwhile, the National Economic Development Council, revitalized by the ending of

the trade union boycott, has embarked on an ambitious, six-month programme to secure a drastic reduction in unemployment. The jobs programme was drawn up by Mr John Cassels, director general of the National Economic Development Office.

The agreement to investigate where new jobs will come from after the recession is seen as the most significant move by union, employers and government leaders to reach positive conclusions about future economic policy.

In spite of union opposition to the Government's economic strategy, Mr Norman Willis, the TUC general secretary, made clear at this week's meeting of Neddy that the movement insisted on being heard.

New move to seize NUM assets

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Sequestrators appointed to seize the £8 million assets of the National Union of Mineworkers will appear in the High Court today to take fresh steps towards securing more than £2 million held in a Dublin bank.

Mr Michael Arnold, the Receiver appointed to take charge of the union's funds, is also expected to announce shortly that he has been successful in securing more than £4 million of the union's assets held in a Luxembourg finance house.

Talks have been progressing between Mr Arnold, a senior

insolvency partner in the firm of Arthur Young McClelland Moores, and lawyers for the bank, and yesterday he sought an audience before a judge in chambers. The Receiver and the sequestrators, appointed after the union failed to pay a £200,000 contempt of court fine, have been working closely together in their attempt to trace and seize the NUM's funds.

Shortly before Christmas, the union won back partial control of the £2.7 million assets moved to a Dublin bank so that it

could continue the legal battle to regain control of its funds.

Today the sequestrators, appointed by the High Court from the City firm of Price Waterhouse, will be reporting their progress. They may also seek an injunction to stop NUM officials from touching the money in Dublin, and requiring them to direct the bank to recognize the Receiver and comply with his instructions.

Nationally, another 188 miners abandoned the strike and returned to work yesterday, bringing the total for the week to 2,216, the NCB said.

Yard names new deputy to Newman

Mr Peter Imbert, Chief Constable of Thames Valley, is to become the new deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and a possible successor to Sir Kenneth Newman as the next head of London's 27,000 officers.

Mr Imbert's appointment was announced yesterday and he starts in March. He succeeds Mr Albert Laugherne who is retiring early because of ill health.

Mr Imbert, aged 51, began his career with the Metropolitan Police, rising through the ranks of the Special Branch and the Anti-Terrorist Squad in the 1970s to become one of the two police negotiators during the Balcombe Street siege in 1975.

NHS manager resigns over contract dispute

Mr Kenneth Punt, one of the new regional general managers appointed under the Griffiths reorganization of the National Health Service, has resigned and gone back to his old job.

Mr Punt, who started as general manager of the Yorkshire Regional Health Authority 10 weeks ago, has gone back to his post of treasurer with the Trent region after failing to agree a contract. Trent had agreed to hold the post open until a contract for the Yorkshire post was settled.

Mr Punt said yesterday the difficulty was not over money or the length of the contract. The problem was over other conditions of service.

Blast was similar to 50lb bomb

By Charles Kneivitt, Architecture Correspondent

The force of the gas explosion at Newnham House, equivalent to a 50lb bomb according to the fire chief at the scene, is thought to have caused the front and back walls of the three-storey mansion block to blow out and the floors to collapse inwards, leaving a pile of rubble 10ft high.

The block, contained 12 flats, was designed in 1932 by the London architects Colebridge, Jennings and Soimewood, which no longer exists as a practice. The contractor was John Laing.

Construction was in load-bearing masonry, with the floors carried by the front and back walls. The floors were made from reinforced concrete incorporating hollow terracotta pots, a common method of construction at the time.

A district surveyor from the Greater London Council, who spent yesterday at the site, said that the building appeared to have been very soundly designed and built.

The blast is believed to have occurred at either the ground floor or possibly at second floor level. It was still unclear last night whether there is a void beneath the building which may have allowed to build up of gas to take place.

It was thought that gas had escaped from a fractured mains supply and had been sparked by the use of an appliance.

Regulations on the use of gas in residential blocks were tightened after the Ruman Point gas explosion in 1968. However, the new regulations did not apply to Newnham House.

The blast demolished six flats.

Neighbouring residents reported that they had complained in the past about gas flooding basements and cellars after the installation of individual gas central heating in the flats.

Cold weather a clue to likely gas leak

By David Cross

The Health and Safety Executive, the Government's safety watchdog, yesterday began a full-scale investigation into the gas explosion which was almost certainly responsible for the destruction of part of the block of flats in Putney.

A spokesman for South-eastern Gas said that Mr Michael Ashcroft, who lives at 12 Newnham House had reported a gas leak at 7.02am. But by the time a service engineer had arrived at 7.25am, the explosion had already occurred.

The spokesman said that Segas was investigating claims by residents in the Putney Hill area that gas board officials had visited the block on several occasions in recent weeks to investigate problems with various gas appliances.

According to figures provided by the British Gas Corporation, yesterday's explosion was the worst in terms of lives lost since October 1983 when six people died and 13 were injured in an explosion which demolished part of a tourist hotel on the outskirts of Aberdeen.

Dr Philip King, of the University of Manchester Insti-

tute of Science and Technology, who conducted an investigation into a series of gas explosions in 1977, speculated yesterday that the Putney explosion could have been caused by a fracture in a gas pipe near the bottom of the block of flats.

Dr King's report, investigating explosions in Beckenham, Bradford, Brentford and Bristol said that fractures occurred mostly in winter, when the ground surface was sealed by snow or frost, and gas escaping from a broken main cannot escape upwards and seeks a sideways path.

Dr Philip King, of the University of Manchester Insti-

Hospital emergency plan copes well with disaster

By Robin Young

Administrators at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton, south-west London, were delighted yesterday with how smoothly their accident emergency procedure coped with the effect of the Putney gas explosion.

Mrs Frances Russell, the director of nursing services, said that the hospital was lucky in that the gas explosion occurred during an overlap period while two shifts of staff were in the hospital.

Staff living locally came into the hospital as soon as they

Table with 4 columns: Incidents causing damage, Incidents causing deaths, Number of deaths, and a fourth column with values 10, 10, 3, 13, 3, 11, 11, 15, 9, 20, 12, 7.

Serious gas explosions, 1975-84

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Health service 'cannot afford cancer screening' By Nicholas Timmins The National Health Service cannot afford screening for breast or cervical cancer or spina bifida babies, a group of doctors said yesterday. Although each test is relatively cheap and effective, many patients have to be covered to detect each case, so that the actual cost of preventing a death or avoiding long term disability is too high to be affordable, they say in The Lancet.

Rabbi loses appeal against dismissal By Tony Searling Rabbi Clifford Cohen yesterday lost his claim for unfair dismissal against a north London synagogue. An industrial tribunal found allegations that he had neglected his pastoral duties justified. Mrs Stella Hollis, chairman of the tribunal, said Rabbi Cohen himself had admitted being a rabbi as being a profession rather than a vocation and "it may be that approach which has led him to this tribunal". The Southgate Progressive Synagogue had been responsible in dismissing him when he refused to give his new telephone number to the synagogue's council because he did not want to be disturbed during his pastoral duties. The tribunal had been impressed by the devotion and dedication of two other rabbis who had appeared as witnesses for Rabbi Cohen, in their accounts of their pastoral duties. The tribunal was "completely unable to comprehend why two other rabbis should be able to do it, and the other not". Another of the rabbi's witnesses had described his "friend" as "somewhat immature". The tribunal concluded that many other allegations made against Rabbi Cohen during the four-day hearing, from making digs at members of the congregation during a sermon to failing to visit the sick, were also justified. There was, in short, "no hidden reason" for the dismissal. Rabbi Cohen, aged 36, had clearly been lacking "in his capacity as a spiritual leader".

NF student peace plan agreed By Patricia Clough Hopes of an end to the disruption at the North London Polytechnic over the National Front organizer, Mr Patrick Harrington, increased yesterday as its students accepted a compromise. Under the agreement between Dr John Beishon, the acting director, and student leaders, the third year philosophy lectures that Mr Harrington is enrolled to attend will be moved to a small building at 53, Benwell Road, away from the main polytechnic premises. More than 1,000 students voted overwhelmingly to accept the deal. But Mr Peter Redman, a student spokesman, said that if Mr Harrington entered other buildings it would be clear that he was not a serious philosophy student, but a National Front activist and the union would have to reconsider its decision. Mr Harrington earlier yesterday had been banned from attending the meeting by a High Court judge at the request of the Polytechnic.

CRE to sue tenants over petition The Commission for Racial Equality is to sue 40 Greater London Council tenants for signing a petition protesting against the possible arrival of Asians in their street. The tenants, all white, live on the Exmouth Estate, Stepney. They signed the petition last July because they were worried that if the council went ahead with plans to move an Asian family into a house on the estate violence would erupt. The case, believed to be the first of its kind, will be heard at Westminster County Court, London, after Easter. The commission obtained a copy of the petition and after confirming 40 signatures decided to bring a civil action under the Race Relations Act.

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The most controversial newcomer since the Mini pioneered a new breed

Sinclair electric pedal car on the road for £399

By Clifford Webb, Motoring Correspondent

Sir Clive Sinclair launched his electrically powered "beetle" car yesterday, describing it as "a cultural shock for the motorist".

Driving impressions

The CS is arguably the most controversial newcomer to Britain's roads since Sir Alec Issigonis's Mini pioneered a new breed of small car.

Production capacity for 200,000 vehicles a year will be available at Hoover's Merthyr Tydfil factory by June.

Sir Clive said that he had planned a more conventional electric car, but decided to take advantage of legislation introduced in 1983 for electrically assisted cycles.

The CS can be driven by 14-year-olds without a driving licence, insurance or helmet; it is not subject to road tax, does not need the Department of Transport approval and parking regulations do not apply.

The Automobile Association said last night: "We have reservations on two counts: the desirability of allowing the vehicle on the road without insurance coverage and because it seems to have moved from the concept of a motor-assisted bicycle to a road vehicle."

"It could, due to its size and inconspicuousness, present a hazard to its occupant and other road users."

There are more sophisticated Sinclair vehicles to come. The next is expected to appear in about two years. It will also be powered by a conventional lead acid battery.

The third vehicle, at the planning stage, will use a new electricity source under development by a European battery maker.

Controversial it may be, but it is not. This is a well engineered novel approach to basic transport, with severe limitations.

I drove this week on closed roads at the Transport Road Research Laboratory, Crowthorne, Berkshire. The semi-reclining driving position is quite comfortable, with the feet resting on two strong cycle pedals.

The steering layout is a bit of a shock. In place of a conventional steering wheel, it is a handbar which lies under the driver's thighs, with the grips protruding at trouser level and coming nicely to hand. It takes only a few minutes to master and is surprisingly direct and controllable.

The "accelerator" is an on/off button on the handbar operated by the left thumb. Sinclair people talk about a 20-mile range.

My CS's battery was on its last legs after less than two miles of flat-out motoring.

In fairness, I should add this included repeated full lock circling to ascertain its cornering limits. It is very stable. The engineers said this manoeuvre imposed a tremendous overload on the battery.

Leading article, page 13



Power steering: Sir Clive Sinclair in a CS at Alexandra Palace.

Economy size: CS designer Mr Tony Wood Rogers (left) looking up at a lorry. Waterproof clothing is sold as an extra (right) (Photographs: Harry Kerr and Barry Beattie).

Man from the manor hit at neighbour for 'no manners' rebuke

A neighbour's dispute between a former RAF wing commander returning from an evening at the local Conservative association and an accountant who, after a meal in a "jovial" mood, fancied imagining that he might have been a Test cricketer, ended in violence. The evening culminated in a court in Dorset heard yesterday.

The incident occurred after Mr Evans, aged 44, an accountant and investment adviser, was conditionally discharged for two years at Sturminster Newton Magistrates' Court, after it was said that he had aimed a punch at the former RAF wing commander Paul Evans, knocking a cigar out of his mouth, and then smashed the window of his car with the bat.

The incident occurred after Mr Evans, aged 44, an accountant and investment adviser, was conditionally discharged for two years at Sturminster Newton Magistrates' Court, after it was said that he had aimed a punch at the former RAF wing commander Paul Evans, knocking a cigar out of his mouth, and then smashed the window of his car with the bat.

Mr Evans, who was awarded the DFC for shooting down seven German aircraft, told the court he had told Rew: "The reason you are not accepted round here is not a question of money, it is a question of manners". But he said he had not driven over Rew's foot as his neighbour had claimed.

Mr Evans, who lives in the adjoining Thornhill Manor, denied a charge of destroying a car window without a lawful excuse. The bat, signed by members of the 1948 Australian cricket team, including Don Bradman, was produced in court.

The magistrates heard there was a history of disputes between the two men over rights of way and access. Mr Evans, who said he had twice taken out injunctions against Rew, told the court that on November 16, after he and his wife returned home, his wife's fur coat caught on the car horn, as she got out, sounding it briefly.

After seeing his wife indoors, he returned to the car, intending to reverse it into the garage, when he saw Rew approaching and swinging a cricket bat. Mr Evans said he got in his car and locked the doors, but Rew punched at him through the open window, missing his face but knocking a cigar out of his mouth.

Rew, who said he shared the week between his Dorset manor house and Albany in Piccadilly, London, said when he heard the car horn sound and saw the car lights flash at his window he thought his neighbour was "trying to wind me up".

He was in a jovial frame of mind after having a good meal and had been looking at the presentation cricket bat which was given to his father for him by the cricketer Bill Brown.

He had gone out and told Mr Evans to "buzz off" and he had replied: "The reason you are not accepted here is because you have not got any breeding".

Unable to think of a reply he flicked the cigar out of Mr Evans' mouth.

£14.5m treasures lost

Britain lost £14.5 million in arts treasures to foreign institutions in the last six months of 1984, and stands to lose even more this year as a result of a government ceiling on works of arts taken in lieu of tax.

The figures were given in a written reply to Mr Andrew Faulds, Labour MP for Warley East. It showed that export licences were suspended for 22 items in the period to enable British collectors and institutions to bid to keep them in the country.

But only three works were retained, the most expensive being a Rembrandt drawing bought by the British Museum for £668,100.

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Argentine engine charges

Two men charged with illegally exporting military engine parts to Argentina were remanded in custody yesterday by Rugby Magistrates Court.

The two men are also charged with receiving gas turbine parts in December, 1983, while believing them to have been stolen.

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2 cleared of child stealing

A judge at the Central Criminal Court decided yesterday that there was no proof of child-stealing in the case of two men accused of taking two girls aged 12 to the Irish Republic.

Sir James Miskin told the jury that he would direct them to return not guilty verdicts on that charge at the end of the trial.

But Leslie Loates and Kevin Maher are still accused of abducting Denise Boscalt and Emma Bishop from their north London homes last May.

Sir James said that the charge of child-stealing depended on proof that either force or fraud had been used.

The prosecution alleges that the girls met the two men in a London amusement arcade where Mr Loates was manager and later lived rough with them in Co Galway. They were found by the police five days later.

Mr Loates, aged 41, of Holloway Road, Islington, north London, and Mr Maher, aged 25, unemployed, of Clonmehurke, Portlannington, Irish Republic, had denied child-stealing and abduction.

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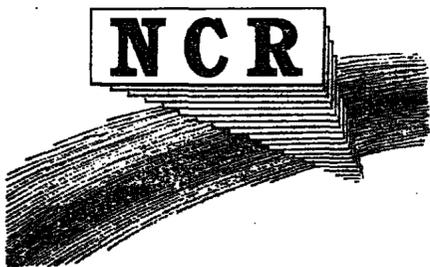
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Record investment: PM prefers other ways of creating more jobs

THE ECONOMY

Mrs Thatcher, the Prime Minister, persistently refused in the Commons to countenance extra spending on infrastructure projects as a means of reducing unemployment.

Extra spending on infrastructure did not create anything like the same number of new jobs as spending on special measures, she said. The £2 billion spent on special measures in 1984 fixed investment across the economy as a whole was running at an all-time record.

Reductions in taxation were one way of increasing take-home pay without increasing the costs of industry and therefore keeping its competitiveness.

Mr Roy Hattersley, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, urged her to accept the evidence that by far the best way of reducing unemployment and creating jobs was public investment in repairs and construction.

Mr Robert Farry (Liverpool, Riverside, Lab) opened the questions by calling on Mrs Thatcher to study the recent report by Dr Alex Scott-Samuel which suggested that hundreds were dying from man-made unemployment - 150 on Merseyside.

What steps does she or her Cabinet intend (he asked) to reduce unemployment in the next few months? If she showed half the commitment to cutting unemployment as to trying to destroy the National Union of Mineworkers, the picture would be different.

Mrs Thatcher: If we had fewer strikes, people might have more confidence in goods produced in Britain, and they would place more orders. The long-term way to reduce unemployment is to produce goods and services which people here and abroad will buy. That is the aim of this Government's policies.

Mr Hattersley: Has she read the report submitted yesterday to the National Economic Development Council describing the chronic deterioration in the infrastructure of the country? Will the Government provide the money to remedy the increasing decay of schools, hospitals, public sector houses and roads, and concentrate available funds on what every objective authority agrees is the best way of reducing unemployment, public sector capital investment?

Mrs Thatcher: He belonged to a Government which actually cut and slashed capital expenditure in many departments, particularly on roads, housing and hospitals.

This Government has put in a lot of extra expenditure on hospitals and roads. Investment this year in major roads will be 27 per cent greater in real terms than in 1978-79. We are putting greater invest-

ment into the water industry this year.

The purpose of putting in public investment is that you get a good return, so that investment is necessary. This Government has a good public investment record, as investment as a whole, fixed investment across the whole economy, was running at an all-time record in 1984.

Mr Hattersley: The Prime Minister ducks the unemployment question. It is central to my point. Does she or does she not accept evidence now supplied even by the Department of Industry that by far the best way to reduce unemployment and to create real jobs is public investment in repairs and construction?

If she denies that, or refuses to comment, we will know what we have always suspected, that once more the Tory Party chooses high employment, because it has other priorities, more consistent with Conservative philosophy.

Mrs Thatcher: I do not agree with him or what he says about what people want. Public sector investment remains at about the same real level now as it was during the last year of the Labour Government.

We do have a record amount of fixed investment across the economy. I would not accept his view that extra spending on infrastructure is the best way of increasing employment. We spend £2 billion on special employment measures. That secures far more jobs than what Mr Hattersley proposes.

Dr David Owen, leader of the Social Democrats: While welcoming back Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, and saluting his courage, can we expect that the CBI's request for £1,000 million capital investment in our country's infrastructure will be given a rather better hearing than in recent months?

Will Mrs Thatcher deal with the Institute of Fiscal Studies estimate that £1,000 million of extra investment would create 165,000 jobs while the same amount of money in tax relief would create only 30,000 jobs?

Mrs Thatcher: I do not agree. This Government is spending through the Treasury on infrastructure this year, partly because of the drought last year, we are increasing the amount of investment in the water industry. It is over cost up on this investment on major roads is 27 per cent greater than by the Government of which Dr Owen was a member.

I do not agree, and I do not know where Dr Owen gets it from, that expenditure on infrastructure is the best way of increasing jobs. We get a far better deal from the £2,000 million expenditure on special measures which helps between 400,000 and 600,000 people.

Mr Anthony Blair (Sedgefield, Lab): When is work on the infrastructure going to be done? Delay is making the cure costlier. Any room for manoeuvre on Budget day should

be dedicated to measures that increase investment in the infrastructure and the necessary efficiency, efficiency and employment.

Mrs Thatcher: I do not quite understand why he is not hearing what I am saying about the amounts spent on public sector investment. It remains at about the same real level as in 1978-79: that is £24,000 million.

Mr Harvey Proctor (Billerica, C): Mrs Thatcher says that during 1985 the main economic target will be continued reduction in the level of inflation. This is likely to lead to the greatest number of people in employment.

Mrs Thatcher: Yes. We shall of course maintain our objective of continuing to reduce inflation.

I understand that might find some support on the Opposition side. I recall the occasion when Mr Hattersley said in December 1978: "Our immediate intention is to hold the inflation rate at or about its present level."

"Our eventual aim is to reduce the level to that enjoyed by our most successful competitors. Unless we achieve our objective none of our other policies, economic growth, lower inflation, higher investment and improved services financed by public expenditure, can fully succeed." (Loud Conservative cheers.)

Dr Oonagh McDonald, an Opposition spokesman on Treasury and economic affairs: Why, in her answers about public investment, does Mrs Thatcher continually ignore the fact that the weekly report talks about many millions of pounds worth of repairs still to be carried out to roads, sewers and houses in particular?

Why does Mrs Thatcher ignore the fact that many people are living in gross discomfort in damp and dismally houses? Repairs to those houses would make their lives far more comfortable and provide many jobs.

Mrs Thatcher: This Government is spending some £24,000 million on public sector investment. On housing, there has been a switch of resources from the public to the private sector. That reflects this Government belief that most people wish to own their own homes.

Water-occupation rose by 1.7 million between 1979 and 1984. Dr McDonald clearly criticizes the record of her own Government because the dwelling stock in this country rose by 900,000 between 1979 and 1984.

Mr Hattersley later during business questions, asked Mr John Biffen, Leader of the House, if he would remind the Prime Minister that when she so fastidiously quoted what he has said, unemployment at the time was more than two million less than at present.

It was announced that there would be a debate on Tuesday on an Opposition motion on the reduction of unemployment through public investment.



Tebbit welcomed back

MPs cheered and waved their order papers in traditional fashion as Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, returned to the Government front bench during questions about Northern Ireland.

Mr Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, who was interrupted during an answer about the Northern Ireland assembly, welcomed Mr Tebbit warmly.

I congratulate him on the courage he has shown throughout these past weeks (he said) and I ask him to offer our very best wishes to his wife.

Mr Stuart Bell, (Middlesbrough, Lab), an Opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, echoed the welcome in saying: As duty officer of her Majesty's Opposition, may I take the opportunity to welcome Mr Tebbit to his place. May I paraphrase the song? We have grown accustomed to his style and hope and pray that he is now restored to his full strength and vigour.

Mr David Steel, Leader of the Liberal Party, later asked Mr Hurd to make clear to the population of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic that the one thing which united all parties in the Commons was their determined opposition to terrorism.

He added: We all rejoice to see Mr Tebbit here and we wish him and Mrs Tebbit well.

Mr Tebbit sat smiling, next to Mrs Thatcher, for about half an hour while the Prime Minister answered questions.

Inquiry refused into McCabe death

ULSTER

Mr Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, rejected demands that he should order a public inquiry into the death of Mrs Nora McCabe.

Mr Robert Parry (Liverpool, Riverside, Lab) said that 79 MPs has signed a motion calling for an inquiry into the tragic and unnecessary death of the young mother of three children.

Will he reconsider his decision not to have a public inquiry? His compensation had been paid to dependants?

Mr Hurd: I have thought hard and long about this. There are two aspects. The first is possible action against individual police officers arising from the death.

I cannot second guess the independent decisions of the DPP who has looked at all the evidence, including the film, part of which was shown recently on television. I have no grounds or standing to second guess that.

I have looked carefully at the use of batons in every incident in which the RUC has to use the rounds is reported to me and every round has to be accounted for. Compensation has been paid.

Mr Smart Bell (Middlesbrough, Lab), an Opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, said that on December 20 the minister had said in a debate that the law provided that any person might use such force as was reasonable and it was incumbent on the police and the Army to operate the law.

Can he say that the force used in the killing of an innocent bystander was reasonable in relation to the circumstances surrounding that death? If not, why not? Will he accede to demands for an inquiry and establish culpability, if culpability there is?

Mr Hurd: I was trying to explain the reason and I do not believe I can second guess the decision of the DPP who had access to all the evidence available.

I shall amend or modify my answer to Mr Parry. What happened to the action by her husband against the Chief Constable was that it was settled out of court on November 29 for a substantial sum.

Sufficient powers over flags

The RUC was confident it had adequate public order powers to deal with the provocative display of flags and had not used the Flags and Emblems (Display) Act (Northern Ireland) 1954 since 1969.

Mr Nicholas Scott, Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said during Commons questions.

There were no plans to repeal the Act but its use and the need for it were kept under review, he said in reply to Mr Kevin McManus (Hull North, Lab).

Mr Scott agreed with Mr Harold McCasker (Upper Bann, OUP) who said that, whether the Act were repealed or not, the police would still have to intervene where the flaunting of a flag was likely to lead to a breach of the peace.

Mr Smart Bell, an Opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland: The only time this Act was enforced in the mid-1960s it sparked off the Divis riot in parliament and it appears that under the common law the same powers exist to prevent a breach of the peace. It is superfluous, irrelevant and therefore should be repealed.

Mr Scott: The powers which the RUC uses exist under the public order Northern Ireland order, 1981.

Opportunity for leaders in Province

There was an opportunity for the elected leaders of Northern and Southern Ireland to move away from arguing across a divide and to find ways of holding practical discussions, Mr Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said during Commons questions.

Mr Stephen Ross (isle of Wight, E): Does he agree that the maintenance of good relations between Dublin and Westminster in parliament and also there are parts of the forum worth building on, not totally dismissed, and that a further parliamentary tier to the Irish-Anglo Parliamentary Council is desirable?

Mr Hurd: A good working relationship between the Republic and the United Kingdom is in the interests of Northern Ireland as well as Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. The point about the parliamentary tier is essentially one for the parliamentarians concerned and not one in which the Government should take the initiative.

Mr Harvey Proctor (Billerica, C): Would he shy away from taking any new political or constitutional initiatives in Northern Ireland in the near future?

Mr Hurd: I have tried to be steady and reasonable in what I have said about these things. There is an opportunity now, primarily for the elected leaders in the Province, to move away from arguing across the divide and finding ways in which they can hold practical discussions. If I can help them I am ready to do so.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Debate on report of Select Committee on the Environment on acid rain.

Next week's business

The main business in the House of Commons next week will be: Monday: Trustee Savings Banks Bill, second reading.

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Friday: Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Bill, Small Business Bill and Motor Cycle Crash Helmets (Restriction of Liability) Bill. The main business in the House of Lords will be: Wednesday: Administration of Justice Bill, second reading. Elections (Northern Ireland) Bill, committee. Tuesday: Insolvency Bill. Wednesday: Debates on disagreements on relations between Britain and the United States and on a cross-Channel link. Thursday: Prosecution of Offences Bill, committee.

Minister seeks early report

EXPLOSION

Mr Tom King, Secretary of State for Employment, told the Commons he had asked for a preliminary report at the earliest opportunity from the Health and Safety Executive on the explosion at Newham House, Putney, that morning.

All the evidence available pointed to it being a gas explosion and teams both from the executive and South East Gas had started their investigations, he said.

So far it was known that three people had died, six were unaccounted for and a further two were in hospital. Mr David Mellor, Under Secretary of State, Home Office, and MP for Putney, said that the skill and bravery shown by the rescue services in the dangerous conditions, he added.

He agreed to a request by Mr Nicholas Soames (Crawley, C) who had called for a statement on the explosion, for the report of the inquiry to be prepared urgently and made public.

Mr John Prescott, chief Opposition spokesman on employment, said this was the first domestic gas explosion to be handled by the Health and Safety Executive since it took over responsibility in 1984. He asked for the executive to make an assessment of gas explosions in the last five years in its report.

Mr King said it was worth remembering that there were 16 million gas consumers in Britain and nine million gas central heating systems. Last year there were 28 serious gas explosions and a steady decline in the number of accidents in the past three years.

Mr Simon Hughes (Southwark and Bermondsey, L) called for an investigation into the response time by the emergency services and for money to be made available for maintaining the infrastructure if it was shown, for instance, that the condition of the piping in the present had been a contributory factor to the inability to deal quickly and properly with complaints which had been made about the gas service in Putney in recent weeks.

Mr King said he could not comment on Mr Hughes's last remarks but South East Gas had received a call at 7.02 am and its van had been outside the block of flats at 7.12 am, the time of the explosion.

Government move to assist hard-hit dairy farmers

AGRICULTURE

The Government wanted to help the group of milk producers hit hardest by the introduction of EEC quotas, Mr Nicholas Jopling, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said in the Commons when moving the second reading of the Milk (Cessation of Production) Bill.

That group, he said, comprised the small specialist producers with no alternative to milk production because of the kind of farms they owned and who had to adapt to lower levels under the quota system. They might suffer exceptional hardships as a result of quotas.

The Government's aim was to allow those producers to return to their 1983 levels of production without becoming liable to supplementary levies.

The outgoing scheme had therefore been introduced to compensate those who were willing to give up dairy farming so that the quotas thereby released could be reallocated to those in particular need.

There was no existing United Kingdom legislation on which the scheme could be based and the Government had decided to start it on a non-statutory basis, with legislation to follow later, hence the introduction of the Bill.

The cost of the scheme would be up to £50 million over five years, at the most 250 dairy farms would be surrendered or the equivalent of £650 per cow.

Overall, UK wholesale producers' primary quota allocations had been set at a level below 1983 levels of production.

The outgoing scheme came into operation in July, 1984 and 45 per cent of the payments so far made had gone to tenant farmers. In order to qualify, outgoing must give up their quotas in full and could not return to milk production as long as the scheme was in operation. Tenants in England and Wales required their landlord's consent.

The Bill provided that compensation payments could be recovered if the conditions of the scheme were not complied with.

The Bill would not come into effect until two months after its enactment to allow similar arrangements to be made in Northern Ireland through an Order in Council.

There was likely to be a substantial shortfall in quota made available by the scheme in Northern Ireland which was

disappointing and had implications for small producers and those who met the exceptional hardship criteria. His department was looking at ways to deal with this poor response.

Mr John Home Robertson, an Opposition spokesman on agriculture (East Lothian, Lab), said the minister negotiated a deal for the British dairy industry last March. Forty years progress was thrown into reverse virtually overnight. Britain had the best case, but the minister managed to come away with just about the worst deal and must stand condemned for that failure.

He would have a final chance to redeem the eyes of the nation by a deal on agriculture when it came to the 1985-86 price fixing negotiations. He should seek to ensure that the additional 1 per cent cut in

production due in April should not apply to Britain. He had given more than enough reasons. This country's producers had suffered more than enough already, and it was right to demand that he should retreat no further.

The Opposition understood the need to restrain dairy production in the Community and the need to restructure the industry, but over-production was not significant problem in Britain. There was no need for the minister to make the concessions he made last year. It was as though he had one hand on the throat of the dairy industry and the other across his eyes because he could not bear to see the effects of what he was doing.

At least 250 dairy stockmen were likely to lose their jobs and yet offer of compensation had been made to them or other employees in the dairy industry.

We are appalled (he said) at the way the Government has treated the

farming industry in the last year. What this industry needs is sensible restructuring, that is getting its more like rural reorganisation.

The Labour Party was not opposed to the principle of compensation for farmers going out of milk production. That is why it would not be voting against the scheme tonight, but the Bill needed major rethinking during its committee stage.

Mr Robin Maxwell-Hyslop (Tiverton, C) said there was a particular hardship for those farmers who had invested in expanding their milk production at the direct encouragement of the Agricultural and Development Advisory Service right up until the day the quotas were introduced.

He was pleased that Mr Jopling had not suggested today that farmers should have foreseen what would happen, as he had done last year, and that he himself had not shown such foresight.

There was strong resentment against the delay in hearing results of appeals. It was believed the panels and tribunals were inadequate to deal with the large number of different panels, often in adjoining areas, were giving widely differing allocations of secondary quota though the facts were similar.

He said the Government was tolerable only if ministers could extract from the Treasury the tiny sum of £25 million to buy sufficient quota to allow the allocations of secondary quotas to go through without diminution.

Mr Gerald Howells (Ceredigion and Pembroke North, L) said the dairy system was a shambles and farmers were desperate. Most dairy farmers in his area had small or modest holdings and the Government had failed signally to protect their interests.

He and his colleagues would not vote against the second reading because many people wanted the Bill to pass quickly. But unless the Government would accept amendments to help dairy producers it was more than likely that he and his colleagues would vote against third reading.

Mr James Nicholson (Newry and Armagh, OUP) said he would much prefer that the outgoing scheme was not necessary at all. Small farmers were being put out of business. Many of them did not wish to go out of business but saw no alternative. In the longer term this could only have a damaging effect on the dairy industry.

We are appalled (he said) at the way the Government has treated the

Big haul of explosives in 1984

TERRORISM

Since answering questions on the security situation in Northern Ireland in November, one soldier and five civilians had died in incidents arising from the security situation in the Province.

Mr Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said during question time in the Commons.

The security forces continued emphatically to combat terrorism. During 1984 a total of 528 people had been charged with serious offences including 41 with murder and 68 with attempted murder, and 197 weapons, 2,111 rounds of ammunition and 8,335 lbs of explosive had been recovered.

Mr James Molyneux (Lagan Valley, OUP): What value does he attach to the Dublin Government's promise of cooperation when its Foreign Minister, Mr Barry, consistently seeks to undermine and render ineffective moves taken by the Government to prevent terrorism?

Does it not look as if Mr Barry has assumed the role of protector of all people of Irish descent living and working in England?

Mr Harvey Proctor (Billerica, C): It is intolerable for the Irish Foreign Secretary to interfere in matters taken in Liverpool and elsewhere to safeguard the lives of our citizens. Does this not put at risk the professed claims of Dublin to want to improve Anglo-Irish relations?

Mr Hurd: My impression is that although he is pressed hard to comment in the sense described, he refrained from doing so.

Mr Allan Roberts (Bottle, Lab): The security situation in Northern Ireland is not helped if those charged with conspiracy having been arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act are not brought to trial quickly but remanded in custody indefinitely.

Neither is the security situation helped when the Prevention of Terrorism Act is used to arrest people for no reason other than being Irish and drunk. If one cannot be drunk in Liverpool on Christmas Eve, where can one be drunk?

Mr Hurd: The Prevention of Terrorism Act is not my responsibility on this side of the water. I have been surprised at the speed with which people have been rushing in and commenting on recent events before they know what has happened. A little prudence on his part might be advisable.

Massive Soviet capability in chemical weapons

DEFENCE

There was no change proposed in the Government's policy on chemical weapons, a capability abandoned by Britain in the late 1950s, Mrs Thatcher assured the Commons during Prime Minister's questions.

But Mrs Thatcher added that as a responsible government they had a duty to keep defence policy under review in a light of the massive

Soviet capability in chemical weapons.

The Prime Minister's remarks follow a report to a ministerial committee chaired by her, considering a proposal that Britain should resume the manufacture of chemical weapons.

Mr Cyril Townsend (Bexleyheath, C), who raised the issue, urged Mrs Thatcher to make it crystal clear that Britain would keep to its policy of improving defences

against chemical weapons, seeking international agreement on their abandonment, and would not resort to the manufacture of chemical weapons.

Mrs Thatcher: The facts are that Britain abandoned its chemical warfare capability in the late 1950s. There has been no change in Government policy since then. Nor is any change now proposed.

But as a responsible Government we have a duty to keep defence

policy under review in the light of the massive Soviet capability in chemical weapons.

The Government is playing a leading part in the international negotiations in Geneva for a comprehensive, verifiable and worldwide ban on these weapons.

We tabled important initiatives in March 1983 and February 1984. We abandoned our chemical weapons. Any criticism should be of the Soviet Union.

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New £1m fencing at Greenham Common among security moves

By Richard Evans, Lobby Reporter

Security at Britain's main nuclear bases and weapons factories is being intensified to counter "weaknesses", Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, disclosed yesterday.

The measures, which will almost certainly lead to sensitive sites such as Greenham Common being protected by extra-strong fencing costing £1 million, alongside alarm systems and sophisticated electronic devices, come after a critical report into security at military installations, published last July by the Commons defence select committee.

The inquiry by MPs, which examined the level of protection for military sites against the threat posed by terrorists and protesters, highlighted embarrassing shortcomings and demanded urgent action.

Mr Heseltine, in his reply to the criticisms, insists that the Government's general approach to security is sound and that security at nuclear weapons stores has never been breached. "It is nevertheless accepted that in certain specific areas the committee have identified weaknesses", he said.

He details several measures in hand "to achieve lasting improvements to the current state of security" at nuclear bases. Special welded mesh fencing and alarm systems are already planned for the submarine base at Faslane, Strathclyde, home of the Polaris fleet, and after "encouraging" tests, it will soon be decided whether similar security equipment should be



Army drill change for short rifle

The British Army is changing its ceremonial rifle drill because its new rifle is about 15 inches shorter than the present one.

At just over 36 inches the new rifle, demonstrated (above) yesterday at the Army's School of Infantry at Warminster in Wiltshire, is too short for the butt to be rested on the ground while the soldier is standing.

The main changes are that when standing at attention the rifle will be held vertically against the shoulder, and when standing at ease the rifle will be held horizontally across the body. The photograph on the left shows the new and old styles of standing at ease.

The drill was last changed more than 20 years ago when the present self-loading rifle was introduced. It is unlikely to be used for important ceremonial occasions until 1987.

Yard's new code puts emphasis on civil rights

By Peter Evans Home Affairs Correspondent

A new code of conduct for the Metropolitan Police emphasizes the rights of citizens and calls for restraint in the exercise of police powers. The code places a new emphasis on the social service rather than crime-fighting role of the modern police, according to *Police*, the journal of the Police Federation, which has leaked details. All Metropolitan Police officers are to receive copies of the guidance.

It tells police that their duty is "to act always for the general public good, as a helpful and reasonable public servant, and not merely as an enforcer of the law."

The *Handbook of Guidance for Personal Behaviour* remains in keeping with the primary objects for the Force laid down in 1829 by Richard Mayne, one of the two joint Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police. He said then that the principal object was to prevent crime.

The updated code to be introduced by Sir Kenneth Newman, the present Commissioner, emphasizes the need to prevent and detect crime; to keep the peace; to assuage fear of crime and disorder.

But it also calls on officers to sustain the right of free speech, free association, access to legal advice and to silence and to sustain the presumption of innocence.

Society must query its role in crime, policing expert says

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Reporter

Society should ask itself whether it shares the blame for the rise in crimes such as burglary and mugging rather than accuse the police of failing in their duties, an expert on policing strategy said yesterday.

Professor John Brown, director of the Centre for Policy Studies in Social Order at the Cranfield Institute of Technology, said that the police had improved their efficiency to deal with organized crime but the methods had not stemmed opportunistic or "mass" crime.

He told a London conference in policing in the 1980s, organized by the Association of Metropolitan Authorities: "But to what extent is 'mass' crime a police problem? If we accuse the police of failing society in this sphere we must also question whether - and how - society is failing the police."

Studies in France had shown recently that the rapid rise of "mass" crime was linked to a wide range of social and economic factors, many of them not police matters, Professor Brown said.

Although the Home Office talked of a common crime prevention strategy, there were barriers. They included police attitudes on enforcing the law as

against keeping the peace, a lack of common purpose between the police and other agencies and between the police and communities.

Professor Brown said that local politicians and the police were too often to be found playing "games of catch-as-catch-can for power on the tricky pitch of 'accountability', to the growing dismay of society on the sidelines, concerned much more with the goals of peace and security."

There was also a shift towards central control of policing policy at a time when many police leaders were looking towards decentralism within their forces to create greater co-operation, Professor Brown said.

What was needed to fight "mass" crime, if the police were not to continue to be expected to get results impossible to achieve, was co-operation in the sharing of information, experience and responsibility. There must also be a common assessment of preventive policies.

But the signs for the future were not fair, Professor Brown said. Neither the left nor the right of the political spectrum was creating any long-term strategy.

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What 12% p.a. gross pays you every month

Investment	Average monthly income	Investment	Average monthly income	Investment	Average monthly income
£ 2,000	£ 20.00	£11,000	£110.00	£20,000	£200.00
£ 3,000	£ 30.00	£12,000	£120.00	£25,000	£250.00
£ 4,000	£ 40.00	£13,000	£130.00	£30,000	£300.00
£ 5,000	£ 50.00	£14,000	£140.00	£35,000	£350.00
£ 6,000	£ 60.00	£15,000	£150.00	£40,000	£400.00
£ 7,000	£ 70.00	£16,000	£160.00	£45,000	£450.00
£ 8,000	£ 80.00	£17,000	£170.00	£50,000	£500.00
£ 9,000	£ 90.00	£18,000	£180.00	You can hold any amount from £2,000 up to £50,000 in multiples of £1,000. Each £1,000 of Income Bonds produces an average of £10.00 a month - £120.00 a year.	
£10,000	£100.00	£19,000	£190.00		

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Your savings are never touched. Your monthly cheque represents the interest on your investment, so you can enjoy an extra monthly income and be sure that your capital is completely safe - the cash you put in is the cash you'll get back.

Top rates of interest. Income Bonds currently pay 12% p.a. gross. The rate paid may change from time to time, but it will be kept competitive. Interest is calculated on a day to day basis. It is paid in full and is subject to tax if you are a taxpayer.

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Invest here and now. You can be sure your investment will always provide a worthwhile income - month in, month out. All you have to do is complete the coupon and send it with your cheque (payable to 'National Savings') to NSIB, Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool, Lancs. FY3 9YP. Or ask for an application form at your Post Office.

It's probably the most enjoyable investment you'll ever make.

NATIONAL SAVINGS INCOME BONDS

PROSPECTUS

1 The Director of Savings authorizes by this Prospectus the issue of National Savings Income Bonds (Bonds).

2 The Bonds are a Government security issued under the National Loans Act 1968. They are registered in the National Savings Stock Register and are subject to the Regulations relating to the National Savings Stock Register for the time being in force, as they apply to the Bonds. The principal and interest on the Bonds will be charged on the National Loans Fund.

PURCHASE

3.1 Subject to a maximum initial purchase of £2,000 (or equivalent) a Bond may be purchased for £1,000 or a multiple of that sum. Payment in full must be made at the time of application. The date of purchase will for all purposes be the date of receipt of the money with a completed application form at the Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool, or such other place as the Director of Savings may specify.

3.2 An investment certificate, bearing the date of purchase, will be issued in respect of each purchase.

HOLDING LIMITS

4.1 No person may hold, either solely or jointly with any other person, less than £1,000 or more than £50,000 of Bonds. Bonds are held from the date of purchase and will not count towards this permitted maximum for lifetime. Bonds held by a person at a time when he is not permitted to hold an investment in the Bonds will not count towards the permitted maximum of a beneficiary's personal holding.

4.2 The Treasury may vary the maximum and minimum holding limits and the manner in which they are to be applied, and may also vary the date on which the maximum or minimum holding limit is to be applied.

INTEREST

5.1 Interest will be calculated on a day to day basis from the date of purchase at a rate determined by the Treasury (The Treasury Rate).

5.2 Interest will be payable on the 5th day of each month. The Director of Savings may alter the date of payment of interest. Interest will be paid in cash or by direct transfer to the account of the holder or to the account of the beneficiary named in the prospectus. Interest will be paid in cash or by direct transfer to the account of the holder or to the account of the beneficiary named in the prospectus.

5.3 If on any payment the Bond is repaid, the interest on the Bond will not be repaid. Interest will be repaid on the date of redemption of the Bond. Interest will be repaid on the date of redemption of the Bond.

5.4 Interest on a Bond will be repaid without deduction of income tax, but it is subject to Income Tax and may be included in any return of income made by the holder.

5.5 The Treasury may from time to time vary the rate of interest, and may also vary the date on which interest is payable, and may also vary the date on which interest is payable.

5.6 Interest on a Bond registered in the name of a minor under seven years of age will normally be paid into a National Savings Bank account in the name of the minor.

5.7 Interest on a Bond will be repaid without deduction of income tax, but it is subject to Income Tax and may be included in any return of income made by the holder.

APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL SAVINGS INCOME BOND

To NSIB, Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 9YP

Initial minimum of £2,000 and multiples of £1,000 up to a maximum of £50,000

1 We accept the terms of the Prospectus and apply for a Bond to the value of £ _____,000

2 Name and address for despatch of investment certificate (if different from above):

Name: _____ Date of Birth (if under 7): _____ Day Month Year _____

3 NAME AND ADDRESS FOR DESPATCH OF INVESTMENT CERTIFICATE (if different from above):

Name: _____ Address: _____

4 DIVIDENDS TO BE PAID BY CREDIT TO: (If not to a National Savings Bank or other bank account, enter name and address to which dividend warrants should be sent):

Name: _____ Address: _____

5 Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

Social trends Unemployed drown their sorrows

Beneath the national aggregates for disposable income and consumer durables, modern Britain is fostering an underclass of unemployed and unskilled workers, afflicted by family breakdown and alcoholism. DAVID WALKER, SOCIAL POLICY CORRESPONDENT, describes the two nations disclosed by the new edition of *Social Trends*.

In recent years a network of advisory and counselling services has grown up, among them Alcoholics Anonymous. In the six years before 1983 AA's clients increased from 13,400 to 30,000 and the organization expanded from 895 to 1,880 branches - a reflection of growing alcohol abuse.

Social Trends shows how, for men of all ages, serious alcohol problems are much more prevalent in Ulster and Scotland, and among the unemployed. In spite of the fact that the unemployed usually have less to spend on drink and everything else, there is a considerably higher proportion of heavy drinkers among unemployed men.

About 43 per cent of unemployed men aged 25 to 44 are considered heavy drinkers, compared with 28 per cent of men of the same age in work.

This pattern of drinking reflects a cultural habit among unemployed men have manual working class backgrounds, and it is the manual socio-economic groups which include relatively high proportions of heavier drinkers.

Unemployment's effects are more evident than in previous editions of *Social Trends*. Divorce rates among couples where the man is jobless are noticeably high. There is a link with chronic illness. Blacks are more likely to have experienced joblessness than white workers, likewise young people. The latest surveys (for 1983) show that about 94 per cent of professional people and those in management jobs have not been

Men experiencing joblessness in the year prior to interview

Age group	% experiencing one or more spells out of work
15-24	35
25-34	18
35-44	18
45-54	18
All men aged 18-64	18
Colour	
White	17
Non-white	29
Social type	
Professionals/managers	6
Skilled non-manual	11
All non-manual	8
Skilled manual	17
Semi-skilled/unskilled manual	22
All manual	23

unemployed in the past year. But 77 per cent of manual workers had experienced no unemployment in the past year.

The primary division in British society remains work. Non-manual men in 1983 earned £190.70 gross a week; manual men earned £140.10. About four-fifths of the redundancies declared in 1983 were in production industries, and the redundancy rate in those industries, where manual workers tend to be employed, was eight times as high as that in the service sector.

Babies born to families where the male breadwinner is in a manual job weigh noticeably less at birth than the infants of skilled and professional people.

In spite of growth in car ownership, about 41 per cent of British households have no vehicle, meaning they either stayed but or used public transport.

Tomorrow: New Trends *Social Trends* 15 (Stationery Office), £19.95. Leading article, page 13

Men's Drinking Habits

Age Group/Employment	Type of Drinker as % of employment group	Abstain	Occasional	Frequent	Heavy
Age 18-24					
Working	4	11	49	35	
Unemployed	7	19	36	38	
Economically inactive (eg student)	9	11	52	27	
Age 25-44					
Working	3	19	51	28	
Unemployed	7	13	36	43	
Economically inactive					

Sample too small to be reliable.

Doctor on bomb plot charge is remanded

A part-time consultant psychiatrist, Dr Moina O'Shea, aged 65, was remanded in custody for a week yesterday when she appeared before magistrates at Liverpool accused of conspiring to cause an explosion.

Police officers patrolled the roofs of neighbouring buildings and everyone entering the court and everyone entering the court was searched as Dr O'Shea, of South Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, appeared, charged under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 1974, of conspiring with four others to cause an explosion in the United Kingdom.

Soccer fan is jailed for kicking player

A Glasgow Celtic soccer supporter, who attacked a player at a European Cup tie was jailed for three months by Strangeways magistrates, Manchester, yesterday.

Hugh Honeyman, aged 31, of Mansfield Hill, North Chingford, Essex, ran on to the pitch at Celtic's match with the Austrian team Rapid Vienna.

He broke away from the police who had restrained him and kicked Rapid's goalcreeper, Peter Pacult, in the groin.

Honeyman had admitted behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace.

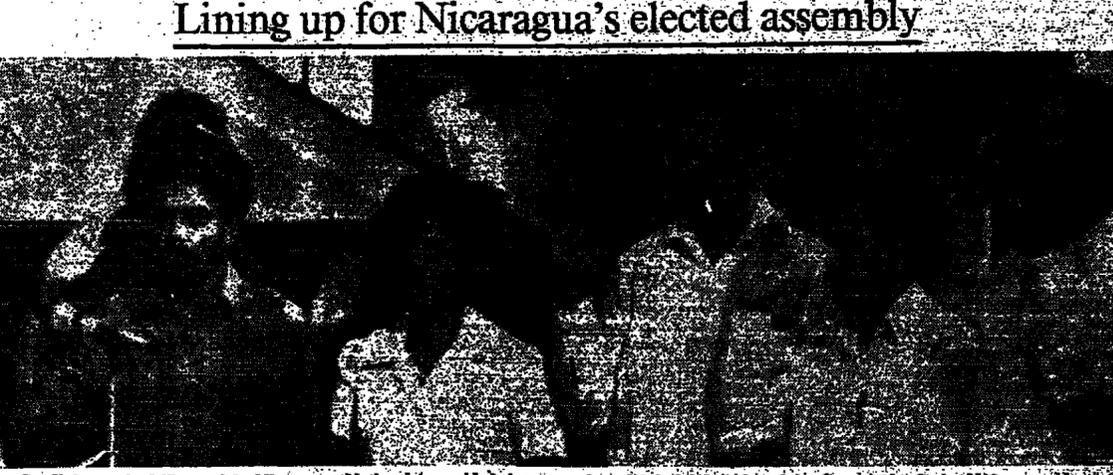
Commentary

Geoffrey Smith

One of the problems with East-West relations is that the attitude of the West oscillates so easily from shrill abuse to euphoria and back again. When President Reagan was making his "evil empire" speeches the danger was that his strident tone made it hard for public opinion to accept that he was prepared to deal with the Soviet threat on a rational basis. Now there is a danger that Geneva euphoria may make it hard for public opinion to accept that there is really much of a Soviet threat at all.

Ramphal seeks ways to cool Tamil crisis in Sri Lanka

By Our Foreign Staff
Mr Shridath Ramphal, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, is understood to be preparing an initiative to reduce tension in Sri Lanka and improve its relations with India. He is thought to be setting up a working group which would recommend the form that an initiative might take, and perhaps set down general guidelines. The group would probably include a Sinhalese and a Tamil academic.



Sandinista oath: Officers of the Nicaraguan National Assembly being sworn in on Wednesday. Left to right: Commander Carlos Nunez, president; Commander Leticia Herrera, Señor Clemente Guido and Señor Mauricio Diaz, vice-presidents; and Señor Rafael Solís, secretary.

Castro drops in to brighten Ortega's day

From Alan Tomlinson
The unexpected arrival of President Fidel Castro of Cuba injected a badly-needed shot of revolutionary excitement into an otherwise subdued occasion yesterday as the Nicaraguan President Señor Ortega, was sworn into office.

Hidden dangers of Star Wars policy

Had there been no agreement - or if Mr Shultz and Mr Gromyko had just agreed to meet again themselves in a few months - there would have been a sense of anti-climax which would have damaged relations both between East and West and between the United States and its European allies. We should all have been arguing today as to whether American or Soviet intransigence was more to blame and many a finger would have been pointed at President Reagan's attachment to his Star Wars scheme.

The superpower dialogue

Reagan hails a new beginning
From Christopher Thomas, Washington
Despite Afghanistan, Poland, KAL flight 007, Nicaragua, Cambodia and missile deployments in Europe, both Washington and Moscow are sending out positive signals about the prospects for super-power relations in 1985.

Iceland the hottest spot in Europe

Reykjavik (Reuter) - While Europe shivers in a big freeze, Iceland has been enjoying extraordinarily mild weather since Christmas with temperatures up to 10 deg C (50 deg F) and more in many coastal areas.

Kennedy and Botha swap bitter words

Cape Town (AP) - Senator Edward Kennedy traded bitter accusations yesterday with the South African Foreign Minister, Mr R. F. "Pik" Botha, on the living conditions of American blacks. Later, the senator, who is on a fact-finding tour of South Africa, visited the condemned Crossroads squatter camp near here.

Ex-minister welcomes inquiry

Ankara (Reuter) - The Turkish Parliament decided unanimously to inquire into bribery charges against the former Minister of State, Mr Ismail Ozdogar, in a move which could lead to his trial.

Paris: Some reservations

France has given only a reserved welcome to the US-Soviet agreement to resume arms talks. While it has always been in favour of balanced arms reduction, it fears that the extended scope of the talks could undermine its own defence policy (Diana Geddes writes).

Rome: Pope sees envoy

Mr Robert McFarlane, the US National Security Adviser, discussed the outcome of the Shultz-Gromyko talks in a 28-minute private audience yesterday with the Pope (John Earle writes). Before entering the Vatican, Mr McFarlane said: "President Reagan explicitly told me to ask the Pope's advice about the Geneva results."

Bonn: Nitze briefs Kohl

Chancellor Kohl was briefed yesterday by Mr Paul Nitze, the US arms control adviser, on the Geneva talks, and the two men agreed that absolute discretion was essential if the negotiations were to succeed (Michael Binyon writes).

Dream fails for widow

Paris - The year-long struggle by Mme Parpalax to have a baby by artificial insemination with the sperm of her dead husband has ended in failure (Diana Geddes writes).

Flood of offers to bachelors

Pisa (Reuter) - The unmarried men of this tiny Spanish Pyrenean village say they can no longer cope with telephone calls for their advertisement for wives in a local newspaper started a flood of would-be brides.

Both sides satisfied with US-Soviet trade meeting

Moscow (Reuter) - Two days of US-Soviet trade talks ended in Moscow with reports of progress.

Disclaimer on dirty tricks

From Roger Boyes
Warsaw
Former Colonel Adam Pietruszka, the most senior secret police officer charged with involvement in the killing of Father Jerzy Popieluszko, yesterday declared his innocence and insisted that he never authorized the use of force or "dirty tricks" against the pro-solidarity priest.

Kasparov fails to cash in on his advantage

Moscow (AP) - Gary Kasparov, the challenger, abandoned his attempt to secure his second victory in the world chess championship and agreed to a draw yesterday after 70 moves.

Up and about

Louisville, Kentucky (Reuter) - The world's only patient with an artificial heart, Mr William Schroeder, aged 52, is strutting up to the equivalent of two city blocks at a brisk pace in his daily walks round hospital corridors.

Family tragedy

Paris (AP) - Firemen broke into a sixth-floor apartment here and found the bodies of six members of the Guillemin family dead, apparently asphyxiated by a faulty water heater.

Howe's last African stop

From Charles Harrison, Nairobi
Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, arrived here yesterday on the final leg of his African tour. Before leaving Lusaka Sir Geoffrey had a "warm and cordial" meeting with President Kaunda, at which he repeated Britain's wish to see full independence achieved in Namibia.

Queen's Gambit declines

White Kasparov, Black Karpov
Queen's Gambit declines
1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 e6 3. Bg5 Nbd7 4. Qd2 Be7 5. Nc3 O-O 6. Bf4 c6 7. e3 d5 8. Bxd5 Nxd5 9. Nxd5 Nc6 10. Nc3 Bf6 11. Bg5 Qc7 12. Qd3 Bg7 13. Bxf6 gxf6 14. Qd2 Bg7 15. Qc3 Bf6 16. Qd3 Bg7 17. Qc3 Bf6 18. Qd3 Bg7 19. Qc3 Bf6 20. Qd3 Bg7 21. Qc3 Bf6 22. Qd3 Bg7 23. Qc3 Bf6 24. Qd3 Bg7 25. Qc3 Bf6 26. Qd3 Bg7 27. Qc3 Bf6 28. Qd3 Bg7 29. Qc3 Bf6 30. Qd3 Bg7 31. Qc3 Bf6 32. Qd3 Bg7 33. Qc3 Bf6 34. Qd3 Bg7 35. Qc3 Bf6 36. Qd3 Bg7 37. Qc3 Bf6 38. Qd3 Bg7 39. Qc3 Bf6 40. Qd3 Bg7 41. Qc3 Bf6 42. Qd3 Bg7 43. Qc3 Bf6 44. Qd3 Bg7 45. Qc3 Bf6 46. Qd3 Bg7 47. Qc3 Bf6 48. Qd3 Bg7 49. Qc3 Bf6 50. Qd3 Bg7 51. Qc3 Bf6 52. Qd3 Bg7 53. Qc3 Bf6 54. Qd3 Bg7 55. Qc3 Bf6 56. Qd3 Bg7 57. Qc3 Bf6 58. Qd3 Bg7 59. Qc3 Bf6 60. Qd3 Bg7 61. Qc3 Bf6 62. Qd3 Bg7 63. Qc3 Bf6 64. Qd3 Bg7 65. Qc3 Bf6 66. Qd3 Bg7 67. Qc3 Bf6 68. Qd3 Bg7 69. Qc3 Bf6 70. Qd3 Bg7

Ex-Colonel Pietruszka: More balanced approach

Andrzej Grabinski, immediately lodged a protest because the action effectively denied the Popieluszko family any active representation. Mr Pietrowski then replied that he would also forgo the right to answer questions from his own defence lawyers and retreated into a glaring silence.

Song 'copied'

Kansas City (Reuter) - Twenty-eight years after the rock 'n' roll singer Buddy Holly recorded "That'll Be The Day" three musician brothers have filed a suit claiming the hit was copied from one of their songs.

Addis denial

Addis Ababa (AFP) - Ethiopia has dismissed as "malicious and mischievous" reports from Tel Aviv that it had agreed to accept famine relief supplies from the Israeli Red Cross.

Quito deaths

Quito (Reuter) - Five people were killed on the first day of a 48-hour general strike called by Ecuadorian trade unions.

Fabius resists pressures for let-up on economic front

From Diana Geddes, Paris

With only fifteen months to go before parliamentary elections, M. Laurent Fabius, the French prime minister, insisted yesterday that the Government would continue to pursue its policies of economic rigor and industrial modernization. It would not succumb, he said, to pressures for more popular measures.

"I will not change direction for electoral reasons", M. Fabius told a conference of industrialists and economists in Paris, organized by *L'Expansion* magazine. "Despite the difficulties which still exist, I believe that France is on the road to economic recovery and consolidation... Our country is engaged in a critical process of economic and social modernization. That is a long-term affair, however, where elections take place in the short or medium term. That difference in perspective creates real difficulties. But I believe that the French people are sufficiently mature to understand that any action leading to recovery requires time and continuity. At any rate, that is the choice I have made."

Asked whether the Government's present economic policies were not nearer capitalism than socialism, M. Fabius admitted that what he was doing might be considered a far cry from certain hopes or interpretations of what the Socialists would do. But he insisted that it was not so different from what they themselves said they would do.

"When one is a Prime Minister or minister of what-

Green light for more settlements in Israel

From Christopher Walker, Jerusalem

The slowdown in the sanctioning of new Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank ended yesterday with an agreement by all parties in the coalition Government to set up six more outposts there by the autumn.

The controversial decision prompted an immediate telegram of protest to Mr Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, from Mr Yossi Sarid, a prominent Israeli dove. He demanded immediate cancellation of the decision, saying it would undermine the Government's efforts to bring Jordan into the Middle East peace process.

In diplomatic circles there was concern that the plan would harm the efforts of some moderate Arab leaders to put together a conservative bloc which might be prepared eventually to sit round the negotiating table with Israel.

Mr Sarid, a member of the Knesset's foreign affairs and defence committee and an Opposition deputy, argued that it was impossible to call on King Husain to negotiate while undermining the chances for any such talks by building new settlements.

Referring to recent threats by right-wing politicians to take unilateral action if the settlement programme was not allowed to go ahead, Mr Sarid told the Prime Minister it was more important to have peace in the region than inside the coalition.

Mr Nissim Ziv, chairman of the settlement committee of the World Zionist Organization, recently described the demand for new West Bank settlements as "sheer insolence" at a time of mounting unemployment in Israel and severe economic problems in the agricultural sector.



Helping hands: Relief agency helps evacuating an injured Cambodian civilian from a refugee centre near the Cambodian guerrillas' base at Ampil.

Border DMZ agreed near Ampil

Ban Sangae, Thailand (AP)

Thailand and Vietnam have agreed to a demilitarized zone along part of the Thai-Cambodia border occupied by their troops. Major-General Salya Sriphen, commander of Thailand's Eastern Task Force, said yesterday. It will consist of a 22 yard-wide strip down each side of the frontier near Ampil, Cambodia.

Vietnamese officers agreed to the DMZ when they decided to

pull back from a tense confrontation with Thai forces, he said.

General Salya said everything was put "calmly and peacefully" to the Vietnamese. He insisted that four rounds of talks on Wednesday and yesterday between Thai and Vietnamese officers at the frontier did not constitute negotiations.

PEKING: China yesterday criticized Vietnam's "truculent and perverse" military action along the Thai-Cambodian

border, accusing the Vietnamese of killing civilians, violating Thai territory and shooting down a Thai military aircraft.

The Foreign Ministry statement, the second in two days, did not, however, threaten military action against Vietnam, which is fighting against Chinese-backed Cambodian guerrillas.

"The Chinese Government strongly condemns the crimes of aggression by Vietnam".

Fears and doubts on the hostile road to Naqqoura

From Robert Fisk, Naqqoura Village, southern Lebanon

There were three of them on the road - Philip, Rafi and David. Philip was the sergeant, although he looked the youngest and was only 22. He had stencilled his name on his flak jacket just beneath his left armpit and he wore his red Israeli Army beret slightly askew as he bent his ear to the crackling military radio set on the low concrete wall to his left.

His heavy Gaffi assault rifle lay on the ground beside him, for it was a hot day and even the United Nations base on the coast below was shimmering in the midday haze.

Rafi was shorter, only 19, anxious to talk to the foreigners who had driven down the broken little lane towards the sea, happy to recognize European faces in a hostile land. David was 19 too, but he looked about 26, a big, broad-chested man with a fluffy beard. He had nonchalantly pushed his beret into the pocket of his trousers, and kept his eyes on the road to the east. It was Philip who recognized us.

"I saw you in Nabatieh last year," he said, and he was right. He had been ordering the local fruit sellers in the town square to close down their shops. Punishment for their ignorance after an ambush on an Israeli patrol.

Philip had been frightened, waiting for another ambush. Now he looked relaxed and gave us a big smile. "You OK then?" he asked brightly. David wanted to know about life in Beirut. All three asked a lot about Beirut because they had missed the invasion of Lebanon - they were at school when Ariel Sharon sent his Army over the border in 1982.

Down below us, a small white helicopter lifted off from the UN base. Philip had been ordered to close the road for half an hour and a small queue of vehicles had built up behind him - a UN car with two French soldiers in it, a German nun and a lorry carrying militiamen of Israel's "South Lebanon army".

Rafi stared at the coastline through binoculars. He seemed to be the most experienced of the three. "I've been ambushed lots of times," he said. "When you get bombed the first time, it's bad. After that, all the ambushes are the same and you can take it. We got hit for the first time in Sidon. It was a Palestinian who did it." We asked what happened to him. "What do

you think?" Rafi said. "What do you think we do with people who set off bombs for us?"

There was an awkward silence. Then soldiers noticed an old man walking very slowly up the road towards the small barricade of stones they had laid there. He wore a white kuffiyah on his head-cloth and was stumbling, because he was blind.

Rafi walked into the road and moved the stones with his boot. Then he stepped towards the old man and took him by the arm. With infinite care and gentleness, he led the blind Lebanese up the lane past the vehicles, the man all the while thanking him, unaware that it was an Israeli who was being kind to him.

David shook his head. He was unhappy, he said, about this war in Lebanon. Who did he think had won the war, we asked. David did not reply, but a voice behind us said, quite loudly: "The PLO won. The Palestinians won." It was Rafi. He had returned from the road and was standing with his back to the wall. There was a stunned silence. Then David spoke to him in Hebrew and Rafi shrugged.



"I will say no more," he said. The radio crackled several times and Philip ordered the road open. The nun got into her car and the militiamen drove down the hill. Philip also spoke to Rafi in Hebrew and he shrugged again.

We walked to our own car with Rafi and asked him what he had meant by his remark. "I am in uniform and so I cannot say," he replied. "Forget I said that. Please forget it."

He told us to take care in Beirut, and we told him to take care in southern Lebanon. Then we left him there on the roadside with his two young, vulnerable friends, three soldiers from the Golani Brigade and an unanswered question.

Pakistani military court tries leftist lawyer in secret

From Hasan Akhtar, Islamabad

After a year in custody, Mr Raza Kazim, a left-wing lawyer from Lahore, is said to have been formally charged by a special military court set up under martial law in Attock Fort about 50 miles north of here.

The trial of Mr Kazim, who was arrested under the Pakistan Army Act on January 9 last year, along with a number of

army officers, is to be held in camera.

Mr Kazim was *The Times* Prisoner of Conscience on September 25 last year. While the precise charges brought against him are still not known, it is believed that he is accused of subversion, sedition and treason.

Officials have not been prepared to give information about Mr Kazim since his arrest and it is not known whether he is to be tried along with the

arrested Army officers or separately.

The original justification of the arrest for alleged attempts to "seduce members of the armed forces", has now been dropped. Some two dozen members of the armed forces were reportedly detained at the same time as Mr Kazim.

His first meeting with his lawyers was scheduled for yesterday but it was not confirmed whether the meeting actually took place.

Petitions filed by his wife, Mrs Nazem Kazim, in the high court last year challenging the grounds of his detention were dismissed because martial law prevents superior courts from hearing petitions relating to cases being heard by military or martial law courts.

Reports in the Pakistani press about the arrest and raid suggested that the arms and ammunition had come from India for use in subversive activities.

In another development, over 20 opposition leaders and activists were detained in a police crackdown in Lahore in the past 24 hours in an attempt to thwart anti-regime public meetings in the Punjab capital tomorrow.

The movement for the Restoration of democracy (MRD) the opposition alliance composed of 11 parties, has recently stepped up its protests against government restrictions on civil liberties and arrests.



Mr Kazim: Flight reported in *The Times*

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Gibraltar talks open with emphasis on friendliness

From Richard Wigg, La Linea

British and Spanish officials began two days of talks to prepare for next month's full opening of the frontier with Gibraltar. The talks, to be continued today in Gibraltar, deal with such matters as passports, the passage of goods, forbidden entry by the Spanish under the 1982 partial opening, customs, bus and taxi services and car parks.

The import duties to be levied by the Spaniards are of crucial interest for Gibraltar's entrepreneurs.

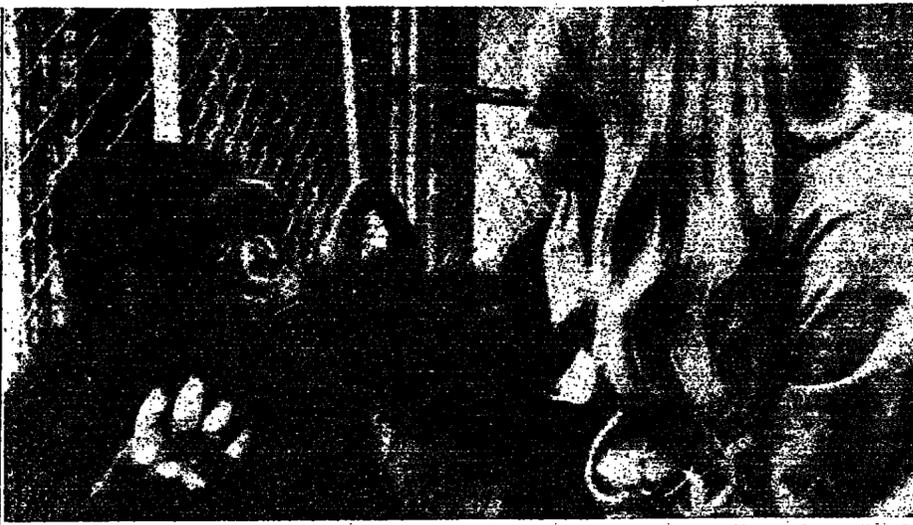
British soldiers of the Gibraltar garrison mounted a smart guard under the Union Flag in bright sunshine but icy winds as the officials came through. The Spanish Army, according to local reports, is already seeking ways of smartening up its own daily flag raising and lowering ceremonies.

The need not to appear the poor relation when the tourists come through also lies behind a demand by Senior Antonio Diaz, mayor of this town, for an immediate injection of £2.5 million.

The two countries are looking for ways to improve their practical problems were tackled so that the opening would go without a hitch.

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Conversation piece: Koko, the 12-year-old gorilla who cried when she learnt her pet cat had been killed by a car, is to be allowed to choose another one. She was told the good news by Ms Penny Patterson, director of the Gorilla Foundation in Woodside, California (pictured above with Koko in 1976), who taught the gorilla sign language.

Swedes promised higher incomes, lower prices

From Christopher Mosey

Sweden's Socialist Government, which both of the main opinion polls say is likely to lose the general election in September, yesterday started a fight to improve its standing with voters by presenting a cautious, deflationary budget. At the same time it promised measures that would give wage-earners increased real incomes in 1985.

The Finance Minister, Mr Kjell-Olof Feldt, said that in their three years in power the

Socialists had cut the budget deficit from 13 to 7 per cent of GNP. Mr Feldt estimated the deficit for 1985-86 at 63.5 billion kroner (£6 billion).

The Government's economic strategy had been a success, he said. Sweden is one of the few countries which in recent years has succeeded in reducing both unemployment and inflation.

Mr Feldt said care had been taken to preserve Sweden's welfare state.

The Government would follow determinedly the restric-

ive policies that gave Sweden an inflation rate of 7.5 per cent last year, Mr Feldt said. He forecast "favourable development" for the Swedish economy in 1985, saying he expected it to achieve a growth rate of 2 per cent.

ROYAL REPRIEVE: King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, threatened with having his phone cut off, was saved yesterday from such ignominy by the ruling party, which was formerly committed by a clause

in its constitution to abolition of the monarchy.

The Royal Family has always enjoyed the privilege of a free telephone, but this year Televerket, the Swedish telecommunications administration, decided that it would be cut off, and the King would have to pay.

In the 1985 budget, however, it was announced that the royal allowance was being increased by 2.3 million kroner to 31.5 million kroner, and part of the increase was to meet telephone bills.

Charity hit may help end rule of Singapore 'pirates'

From Stephen Taylor, Singapore

An international outcry over what amounts to the hijacking of aid to Ethiopian famine victims may ironically rebound to the benefit of others who have suffered at the hands of Singapore's notorious entertainment pirates.

The illegal sale of the pop hit *Do They Know It's Christmas?* recorded by a group calling themselves Bandida to raise disaster relief, is only the very tip of an industry which is among the island's most profitable, if least reputable. But it came at an opportune time for those waging a campaign to drive the pirates out of business, or at least underground.

In the High Court today an organization representing America's 10 main film companies will seek an injunction against five local video distributors of pirated films.

It is the first action of its kind and reflects local impatience at the Government's failure to revise archaic copyright legislation despite international pressure.

The Imperial Copyright Act of 1911, which was designed for the published word, is still the only law covering an array of technologies subject to highly sophisticated piracy in Singapore, including film, video and computer software.

Mr Stephen Club, of the Motion Picture Export Association of America, which is bringing the action, says: "We have had promises that the law will be revised for the past four years. We have waited long enough and now are going to test the existing legislation."

Last year audio pirates, which have been exploiting legal loopholes since the late 1960s, exported an estimated 50 million recorded cassette tapes, mainly to the Middle East, and an unknown but increasing number of video cassettes went to the Pacific region.

Other piracy victims are also fed up. A recent action brought by the British Book Publishers' Association under the 1911 Act could have far wider implications. The defence argued that works not published in Singapore are not covered by the Act. Judgement is still pending, but if this interpretation is accepted it would be a major setback to other litigants.

A number of legal sources believe the Bandida incident, which has embarrassed and angered Administration, has added urgency to the issue. One predicts a new Act will be put before Parliament by April.

The latest market for the pirates is computers. Virtually any software commercially available can be bought over the counter from pirate outlets. And the implications for Singapore are far more serious than illegal sales of records and films.

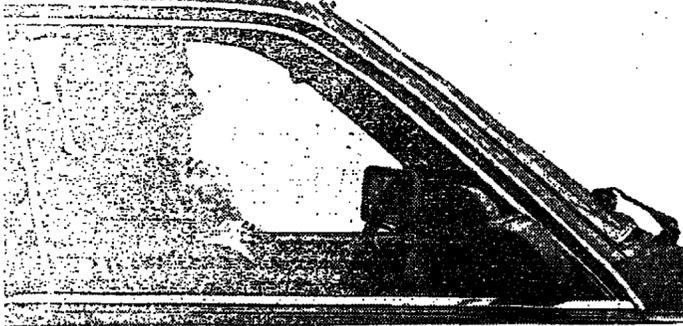
The Administration believes that the island should become a regional data centre, a sort of computer bank for South East Asia. Business sources say that growth in this area has been restricted because of the legal loopholes.

"It's no longer an issue of morality but self-interest," says an American businessman.

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British TELECOM

Seoul anger at pullout by North

From David Watts

Tokyo

South Korea has reacted sharply to the North's cancellation of forthcoming meetings and declined Pyongyang's offer to meet at deputy prime minister level.

The South Korean Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Shin Byong Hyun, said he was "surprised and disappointed" at the North's decision and accused President Kim Il Sung's regime of adopting "a totally unreasonnable position which we cannot help but suspect has an ulterior motive".

The meetings, set for January 17 and 23, were to have discussed economic exchanges and the possibility of renewing full-scale contacts between the two countries' Red Cross Societies. The North's pretext was that US-Korean military exercises, codenamed Team Spirit '85 and beginning next month, were a threat to peace.

Mr Shin told his northern counterpart by telephone: "If your side truly intends to conduct sincerely a dialogue, you should at least abide faithfully by agreements already reached between the two sides.

"If your side continues to break promises, as it has this time, and refuses to hold talks on agreed dates but still proposes a new, different kind of conference, who would believe that your side is sincere in such a proposal?"

A Red Cross official was equally blunt: He said the North had displayed "insincere and cold-hearted political trickery."

Vietnamese execute 3 for spying

Hanoi (AFP) - Three men convicted of treason and espionage last month in Vietnam's biggest spy trial have been executed in Ho Chi Minh City, despite an appeal for clemency by the French Prime Minister, M Laurent Fabius.

Last week Vietnam commuted to life imprisonment the death sentences of two other men convicted on the same charges, including one recognized by Paris as a French national.

The Saigon daily, *Giai Phong*, reported that Tran Van Ba, Le Quoc Quan, and Ho Thai Bach were executed on Tuesday.

The report did not say how the men died, but executions are normally by firing squad.

The two whose death sentences were commuted are Mai Van Hanh, a pilot with Royal Moroccan Airlines, who is recognized by Paris as a French national, and Huynh Vinh Sanh.

They were spared after M Fabius asked the Vietnamese Prime Minister, Mr Phan Van Dong, to show clemency to all five, who were convicted of trying to topple the Government in a plot instigated by China and backed by Thailand.

Relatives in France of Mr Ba, former head of a pro-US Vietnamese students' association in Paris, said that he was also a French national, but Paris was unable to determine his status.

The authorities here insisted that all the defendants were Vietnamese.

Japan's secret war in China Hirohito's uncle endorsed chemical weapons use

From Our Own Correspondent, Tokyo

Recently-discovered documents show that Japanese forces made extensive use of chemical weapons in the war against China and that their use was authorized by a member of the Royal Family.

There are two principal reports and an appendix which deal with the use of the chemical weapons and report on their effectiveness. The appendix contains detailed combat reports of the engagements in which they were used.

It was known that experiments involving chemical weapons were conducted on Chinese during the war, but not that these weapons had been used in action.

The documents are endorsed by Prince Naruhito Higashikuni, an uncle of Emperor Hirohito, who was then commander of the Second Army in China. Prince Higashikuni headed the Japanese Cabinet in 1945 immediately after the end of the Second World War.

The documents show not only that use of the chemical weapons was far more widespread than had previously been supposed and that the Japanese commanders, knowing that their orders were in violation of international law, ordered their men to cover up the weapons' use. They also reveal that locally based military men in China were at first sceptical about the effectiveness of the weapons but later became enthusiastic converts when they saw how dramatically they neutralized the tough Chinese.

That enthusiasm led on to comprehensive chemical warfare experiments in China.

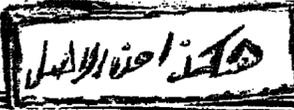
The first extensive use of chemical weapons in the Second World War involved some 375 different operations and the firing of about 41,000 rounds containing the chemicals in both canisters and shells.

"It is clear that much more extensive use of gas weapons was made than we realized before," said Professor Yoshiaki Yoshimi, assistant professor of modern Japanese history at Chuo University, who discovered the material while checking through microfilm his college had bought from the United States Library of Congress.

The principal report entitled *Report of Chemical Warfare in the Wuhan Operation* covers the period August to October 1938 and was drawn up by the headquarters of the Second and Eleventh Armies in China and stamped "Military secret". It is not clear, however, whether large numbers of troops were trained in the use of the weapons or whether they were the province of specially trained men. The technique appears to have been to wait until the Chinese were incapable and then bayonet them. Up to 300 were killed in each engagement according to the reports but it is impossible to calculate an overall total.

The instructions to the troops using the chemical weapons say: "Take the chance to attack when the gas is effective and never leave any proof."

Handwritten signature or mark in a box.



THE ARTS

Cinema

A well-intentioned battering

Finders Keepers (15)

Plaza

Repo Man (18)

Chelsea Cinema; Camden Plaza; Electric Screen; Classic Oxford Street

The Terminator (18)

Leicester Square Theatre

Improper Conduct

ICA

Les Chiens (15)

Minema

"It happens sometimes - busy people just explode - natural causes", a secret service agent brusquely remarks in Repo Man...

wounds of Watergate and Vietnam; the film simply took 18 years to get made. One can see why one felt any special urgency in funding the project...

With a film couched in such a pell-mell style, the actors can seem hardly distinguishable from the pieces of wood, the roller-skates and other comic props...

glee of a deranged sniper who never minds where the bullets fall. At the plot's precarious centre lies Otto, a young drifter agreeably played by Emilio Estevez...

The Terminator, starring the well-equipped Arnold Schwarzenegger, proceeds along more familiar lines. Schwarzenegger, the Cyborg sent from the future...



Running from one bout of trouble to another: Michael O'Keefe in Finders Keepers

handshake were deemed sufficient evidence of homosexuality. As a human document the film is important and frequently compelling...

Les Chiens, made in 1978, is a disappointingly tame film from Alain Jessua, director of one of the cinema's most piercing studies in encroaching madness...

Geoff Brown

Television

Sentimental gloom

Forty Minutes (BBC) looked back at the "promised land" of 1945 when this country seemed about to create what was described as a "new social order"...

unconscious ironies revealed in last night's programme seemed to be that the prolonged existence of that welfare state has vitiated those characteristics of national effort...

Peter Ackroyd

Theatre

In the Penal Colony

ICA

Many a would-be adapter must have cast hungry looks at Kafka's story and given up the attempt when it came to portraying the central character: a fiendishly ingenious execution machine...

least establishes one useful link with the equally unforced adaptation of Kafka that follows in Kafka's little officer steps forward, a mild, nervous figure brimming with fanatical enthusiasm...

Irving Wardle

Music and Machines

Stockhausen Barbican/Radio 3

You cannot form a relationship with a pair of loudspeakers. Boulez used to say, in objecting to concert-hall performances of electronic music...

observation that he had planned this work with different determined degrees of intelligibility in the boy's voice-part; and that celtic and flow of intelligibility suddenly provided a perfect frame of reference for listening to the piece...

Nicholas Kenyon

Opera

Capriccio Royal, Glasgow

Exactly as he did at Glyndebourne 12 years ago, John Cox has situated Capriccio for Scottish Opera in the 1920s, and very becoming it looks in the setting by Jack Notman...

between the natural and the artificial, between the very necessary worlds here of opera as life and opera as opera. When two or three people are in conversation the style is intimate and naturalistic...

Paul Griffiths



Margaret Marshall: a Countess deliciously pleased with herself

Young Artists' concerts

Park Lane Group Purcell Room

Quite apart from all the new and nearly new music, it was refreshing in Wednesday night's Park Lane Group Young Artists' concert to hear Geraldine Wells perform Szymanowski's opulent song-cycle Der Hals Liebeslieder so beautifully...

Stockhausen Barbican/Radio 3

Stockhausen (who introduced all the works in the concert with winning charm) threw away the tape was part of what makes Kamatake one of the most absorbing and compelling experiences in postwar music...

Advertisement for Christopher Reeve and Vanessa Redgrave in 'The Bostonians' at Curzon Cinema. Includes showtimes and contact information.

Advertisement for 'The Gingerbread Man' at various London Arts Choice venues. Includes showtimes and venue details.

Advertisement for 'Young Artists' concerts' at Park Lane Group. Details the program and performers.

Advertisement for 'The Wind in the Willows' at Sadler's Wells Theatre. Includes showtimes and cast details.

Large advertisement for Volvo cars. Text: 'THE SHARES OF VOLVO WERE INTRODUCED ON THE STOCKHOLM STOCK EXCHANGE IN 1935. SINCE THEN THE COMPANY HAS PAID A DIVIDEND EVERY YEAR. AND THE DIVIDEND HAS NEVER BEEN LOWER THAN THE YEAR BEFORE. VOLVO'

The dice are loaded against Atlantic City

America's East Coast casino capital was developed into a gaming centre to rival Las Vegas. But, as David Spanier reports, the gamble seems to be failing



dollars. Small players—who might spend 15 dollars on a day trip to Atlantic City can get a bigger thrill buying a lottery ticket.

Atlantic City, America's East Coast gambling capital, used to be a thriving health spa boasting a carnival atmosphere the length of its famous boardwalk—a 20-yard wide, five-mile long promenade running between its casino skyscrapers and the beach. But her attractions faded. Amusement arcades lost their pull. Piers stood dolefully empty.

monstrous traffic jam. As a resort it could be called Sleaaze-sur-Mer. To be sure, an annual "win" (money bet after payouts, before expenses) of 1.7 billion dollars plus 36,000 new jobs, can't be all bad. But what worries the gaming industry most, and in a different way, of course, the local community, is where Atlantic City is heading. The answer, unless something is done about it soon, is down.

A campaign to revitalize the city by introducing casino gambling developed into a bitter battle between local interests, who saw a crock of gold at the end of the boardwalk, and religious and other community groups who thought their city would become a latter-day Sodom, riddled with organized crime and corruption.

Gaming was introduced to Atlantic City from contradictory motives. On one side pressure from monied interests—legitimate or otherwise—who can say?—to open up a casino centre on the East Coast to rival Las Vegas. And on the other, a desire to revamp and relaunch a crumbling backwater into a bay city. The former would pay for the latter; the latter would justify the former—a double jackpot!

The first casino was opened in 1978 after temporary licensing approval had been rushed through the New Jersey legislature in one day. Now the city, within easy reach of the main industrial and population centres of the eastern United States, has ten casinos to tempt the day-tripper. But it has never lived up to its promise to rival America's ace gaming centre of Las Vegas.

The impression gained at the recent National Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking, held in Atlantic City, is that in practice things have not at all worked out like that in practice. One consequence is that many of the other state legislatures which were thinking of introducing casino gaming as a way of raising revenue, are having second thoughts.

Now people, particularly in the leisure industry, are asking: Is Atlantic City on the skids? As the projections for the new year whizz through the casino managements' computers, the rewards of gambling by the sea look distinctly less alluring than before.

It would be surprising in the present climate, if any other city introduces gambling in the next year or two, though in a place like New Orleans it is always on the cards. Such a rival attraction would naturally divert business from Atlantic City, and Las Vegas too.

The high rollers are mainly to be seen coming up the beach, rather than at the tables. The buses are packed with senior citizens, eking out a few dollars on the refund of their day-trip tickets from New York or Philadelphia. Atlantic City itself is still no more than an extended waste land, strung around a

Instead, states have caught another bug—lotteries. More than a score of places now hold a weekly lottery which, because the prizes are so high, attract a lot of popular attention. In New York, for instance, in the weeks before Christmas, the lottery prize rose to the staggering sum of 20 million

But, as was well remarked at the gambling conference, where there's blood in the water, the sharks come in. It would be amazing, given the history of American gaming, if the mob was not in there. If the direction of the industry up-front is "squeaky clean", as is claimed, then the ancillary services are the rock pool. Construction, catering, gaming equipment, laundry and cleaning, even the labour unions, are liable to infiltration.

All such firms have to go through the regulatory hoops. "We're okay here", one of the New Jersey control board told me, "but did you know that in New York every single restaurant has to get its linen through the Mafia?"

So, given the strenuous efforts made to keep Atlantic City straight, what has gone wrong? The most dramatic image of the year in 1984 was a newspaper picture of the mayor in leg irons and handcuffs. Charged with taking bribes he chose to admit the offence and plea-bargained his way out of office. The incident was not seen as a little local difficulty; it typified the total failure of the Atlantic City administration to redevelop the city as a new resort and get things moving.

New jobs there are, but where is the housing, the schools, the hospitals, the back-up for a new community? There is nothing to show for the city's new wealth. Beyond the famous boardwalk Atlantic City is bereft of all facilities. It is not only empty, but ugly.

There is no way new people can settle in Atlantic City, even if they wanted to, unless they chose to camp out on the beach. And at night, one was warned, it would be just as well not to take a stroll along the boardwalk, anyway.



Casinos Yes!

The lesson of all this is that new money, whether it comes from casinos or anywhere else, is useless without a clear plan for development and effective leadership. Atlantic City has not taken off. On the contrary, unless a start is made immediately to build new roads and provide proper access to the place, it will be strangled in its own traffic jams. Speculators are sitting tight on little bits of real estate, and nothing is moving.

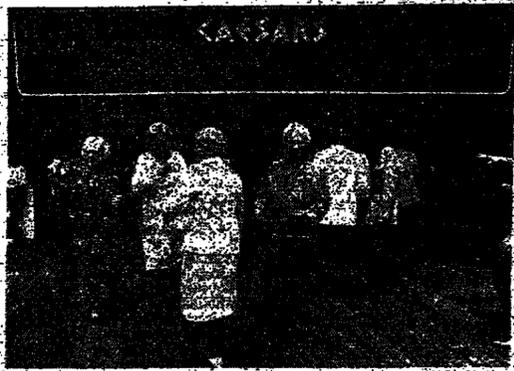
Leadership cannot be expected to come from the casinos. They have their own problems, one of which is an identity crisis. Most of them, heavily oriented toward slot machines as they are, do not have any personality. Can a casino ever be dull? Atlantic City, one must conclude, has gone a long way to achieving that feat (the Golden Nugget excepted, which is modelled on Las Vegas). Even Frank Sinatra, on whom the industry has leaned on so long for colour, has sworn never to return after a row at the tables. But the casinos' basic problem is that their profits are not growing as



The boardwalk: Is there a crock of gold at the end of it?



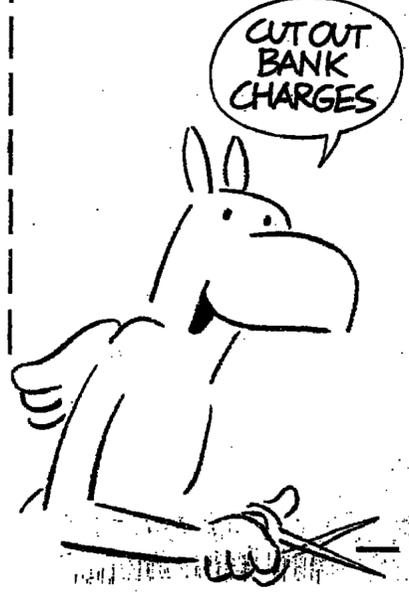
The new faces of Atlantic City enveloping the old.



Elderly day-trippers hoping to hit the jackpot.

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moreover... Miles Kington

Opposite Punch, where I used to go to work, or at least used to go, there was a large office building called Temple Chambers. I must have passed that building at least 600 times before it occurred to me that the name Temple Chambers was wasted on a set of offices. It was the ideal name for a fictional detective of the old school. He probably wore a waistcoat and a bow-tie, had insufficiently cleaned brogues, and always solved his cases in a library in the last chapter. He played the violin on the side, like Holmes, but in the style of Stephane Grappelli.

Other signs have occasionally yielded good names for characters. Max Headroom is one I favour for an upbeat hero, though for a downbeat hero I would prefer Matt Finish. A Dutch hero with aristocratic overtones could only be Hertz van Rental.

These names, though, have been hard to find over the years. Or at least they were till last year, when I was driving through the depths of the country dragging the double bass en route to some far-flung Instant Sunshine gig, and my companion cried out: "Look! It's a tough American lawyer!"

Now, my companion is a sharp-eyed girl, but to spot an American lawyer in the English countryside, in pitch blackness, and to spot that he is a tough one, stretched the credulity. Yet she was right. Because we were passing through a village called Upton Scudamore, and if Upton Scudamore is not a tough American lawyer, I will eat my collected Raymond Chandler.

Scudamore had hard eyes like diamonds, which he kept locked away behind bullet-proof spectacles. When his wife asked him if he had had a good day at the office, he probably charged her for the information. You get the feeling that if Upton Scudamore had been around in the Book of Genesis and offered his services to Adam and Eve, God would have ended up being evicted from the Garden of Eden, though all things considered, Upton would probably have preferred to act for the serpent.

Yes, villages are the answer. What a wealth of fictional names they have: Horsley Woodhouse, Haselbury Plucknett, Eccle Riggs, Morley Smyth, Hinton St George and Bubby Moor—all lying around on Ordnance Survey maps, just waiting for a passing George H. Meyer Regency novel. I like the

Tomorrow

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- Private hospital (6)
- Plus presence (6)
- Stanny (3)
- Gruntling (6)
- Sudhartha (6)
- Disconcert (6)
- Sway (4)
- Superb (8)
- Relix (6)
- At once (6)
- Alcoholic (8)
- Loss colour (4)
- Rubber (6)
- Moves slowly (6)
- Glue (3)
- Marine hive (6)
- Artificial (6)

DOWN

- Magnifying glass (5)
- Having lumps (7)
- Personal property (7)
- And not (3)
- Leather strip (5)
- Innec courtyard (3)
- Illegal (7)
- 18 Results (7)
- 20 Excessive (5)
- 21 Cost (5)
- 22 Resisted (5)

SOULION TO No 540

ACROSS: 8 Undercarriage, 9 Co's, 10 Full-scale, 11 Parle, 13 Diverse, 14 Epaulet, 19 Jolly, 22 Liberal, 24 Sag, 25 Macello, Tower.

DOWN: 1 Hubcap, 2 Muls-on, 3 Trifocal, 4 Palled, 5 Eras, 6 Bazooka, 7 Doleful, 12 Amp, 14 Vaginity, 15 Soo, 16 Engma, 17 Allure, 18 Thrall, 20 Disown, 21 Yogurt, 23 Boor.

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THE TIMES DIARY

Ilk-ly Moores

At the Tory party conference Leon Brittan named South Yorkshire as a left-wing authority that undermined police operations. Now George Moores, chairman of South Yorkshire police authority, has hit back in a most distasteful manner. In this week's New Society he is quoted as saying: "I don't know how to describe him but if I did I might be accused of being a racist. There are too many of his ilk in Parliament. It's worth looking into, that even though there are quite a few of them who are Labour. That Shadow Home Secretary for another."

The good book

Dissident Tory MP Julian Critchley is about to start work on a biography of Michael Heseltine, a chum from Shrewsbury and Oxford days and best man at his wedding. Commissioned by Deutscher, the work will appear around the time of the next election. "When the party will be looking for a new leader," he says. Will the book be a hagiography? Will his nickname Tarzan be mentioned, for example? "I should expect so," replies Critchley. "Mind you, at Oxford Michael was known as God."

Inking

The Imperial War Museum is in no rush to display one of its latest acquisitions - a pen supposedly used to sign France's surrender to Germany in 1940. The museum bought it at Phillips for just £200 amid much giggling from informed collectors, who noticed that the backing material on the presentation box looked suspiciously modern. Museum director Alan Borg, who admitted yesterday they had taken a risk, said closer study has revealed doubts about the seals - "a bit like those on the Hitler Diaries", he says. The museum is now searching for a forensic scientist to analyse the accompanying authentication certificate, apparently signed by Hitler henchmen. Should the pen prove a dud, all will not be lost: Borg says it could be the genesis of a collection of forgeries. "We wouldn't mind being bequeathed the Hitler Diaries."

Enthroned

Grandmother Jane Bennett from Cheshire has perhaps a stronger case for inclusion on the Newbury electoral roll than any of the other "peace" women who gave evidence to an electoral court this week. Apart from testifying that her war widow's pension is sent to her Volkswagen at Greenham's main gate, she also announced that in 1945 she had been elected Miss Newbury.

Outsize job

Not a tall story - but certainly a wide one. In September a size 18 Louis Feraud silk suit worth £425 was stolen from Selfridges and recovered. In November it and an identical suit again disappeared from Selfridges; once more the police recovered them. Last month they went back on display and now, believe it or not, they have disappeared a third time. The police are doubtless searching for two vast, female and very persistent shoplifters.

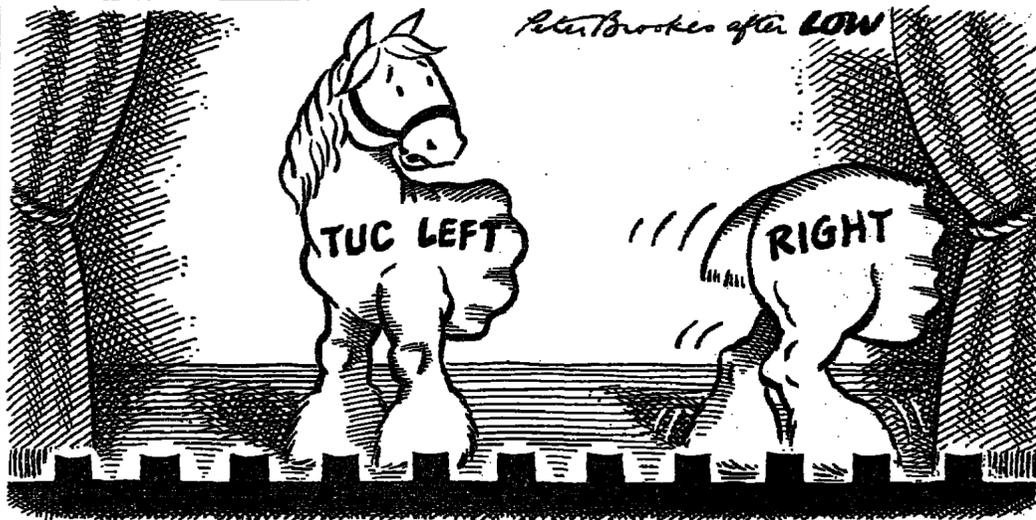


Rate of knots

It took the leaders of two left-wing London councils a mere five minutes to approve the spending of "a minimum of £350,000" of ratepayers' money on a campaign against ratecapping. According to minutes marked Confidential - Not for publication - and sent to me in the airtight plain brown envelope, the decision was taken at a meeting of the executive committee of the Association of London Authorities at County Hall on November 29. A policy committee recommendation on the spending was the sole topic for discussion; Margaret Hodge of Islington and Ted Knight of Lambeth were the only councillors present; and the meeting, which began at 10.45am, ended at 10.50am. Mrs Hodge (whose own council had contributed £50,000 to the campaign that morning) finds nothing amiss in this. The meeting, she tells me, merely gave a "final endorsement" to discussions and debates that had been taking place since June.

PHS

Paul Routledge looks at the crumbling of an anti-government strategy



Ballots: pulling the TUC apart

The last votes are cast today in a ballot that looks certain to compel a radical reappraisal of the TUC's policy of non-cooperation with the Government's labour law reforms.

Though they may not all appreciate it, the engineering workers who have voted decisively in favour of accepting state funds for secret ballots have knocked the prop of credibility from under the union movement's carefully constructed strategy to frustrate the Prior, Tebbit and King legislation. The whole opposition edifice may now collapse in ruins.

The TUC's eight-point policy programme has only two mandatory elements. One is the boycott of ballots on the closed shop; the other insists that "affiliated unions shall observe Congress policy and not seek or accept public funds for union ballots under the 1980 Employment Act fund scheme." This line has been confirmed by successive congresses since 1982, and though there has been some grumbling, nobody has broken ranks.

Until now that is. The electricians' union EETPU has indicated that it intends to accept state aid to finance ballots before strikes and for the election of its national executive. The million-strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers will do the same as soon as its members' decision is formally confirmed.

These developments put the TUC in a quandary. The left would like to discipline the errant electricians and

engineers by suspending them from TUC membership. That would at least stop the rot, it is argued, and perhaps make the rebels reconsider their position.

But any suspension must be taken by the 51-member TUC General Council, which is controlled by a centre-right coalition, many of whose ideas are closer to the dissidents' than they are to congress policy. The hardliners would be unlikely to muster majority support.

The reasons are practical and political. The TUC would be seriously weakened without its second and seventh largest affiliates, representing 15 per cent of its members and its income. And a TUC in which the craft and manual right is unrepresented would become lopsided to the left - and even less able to argue its standing as a representative partner in relations with government.

Unity is the highest form of political expression in the trade union movement, not just something to which lip service is paid. But in practice that unity generally turns out to be the lowest common denominator, the policy on which everybody can agree. It is often expressed in such permissive terms that affiliated unions can and do retain freedom of action.

For the most part, the Wembley strategy on labour law is such a policy. It permits unions to ignore the 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts and the 1984 Trade Union Act,

and offers help to deserving cases of defiance. As the National Graphical Association discovered in its long and ultimately futile battle with Mr Eddie Shah, that assistance does not extend to actual law-breaking on the part of the TUC itself. The miners have made a similar discovery. To that extent, the scope of the Wembley declaration made in the heady days when nobody actually used the laws has been redefined and narrowed in the harsh school of experience.

But there is more to the latest turn of events than a pragmatic bending to the wind of change. By openly flouting a key mandatory section of the Wembley strategy, the engineers have undermined the authority of the TUC itself and to have done so in the name of democracy has exposed the weakness of the TUC's present position. After the AUEW ballot, how can the proponents of non-cooperation with the labour laws claim to represent ordinary members?

Next week the TUC will begin a difficult exercise in limiting the damage. Even a temporarily successful suspension of the dissident unions would split the movement, down the middle and precipitate legal action by the electricians against the TUC.

There is a move, proposed most forcibly by David Bassett, leader of the General and Boilermakers Union, to hold a special conference

to discuss what to do. Such a conference is not required to confirm policy that was reaffirmed at Brighton only four months ago; logically, it would be required only if the policy is to be changed. In the current climate, change could mean only further dilution of the Wembley strategy so that unions could cooperate with the new laws if they wished.

TUC apparatchiks are therefore reluctant to go along with the Bassett proposal. Why, they ask, advertise the movement's weakness? If the policy has to be modified, let it be at the annual congress in September, after the individual union conferences.

The next step will be determined by the TUC's employment policy and organisation committee next Wednesday, and it may be relied upon to choose the lesser evil. The unions will have to live with their credibility problem. In fact, the TUC moderates may yet find powerful encouragement from the unions' failure to tie up to the Wembley strategy. The "new realism" so evident after the general election, but so unfashionable at the last congress, is making a tentative comeback and could shape the direction of this year's Blackpool congress. Moves to modify the policy on labour law would be a boost for those favouring a more accommodating attitude towards Mrs Thatcher's administration.

Henry Stanhope on the British effort to woo Ethiopia's worried leader

When politics goes hand-in-hand with famine



Some 2,000 Soviet advisers have helped construct one of the more powerful armies in Africa, while between 3,000 and 4,000 Cuban troops are thought to remain from the 10,000 which helped Mengistu defeat the Somalis in the Ogaden. The Dergue, or ruling council, might well now wish to get rid of the Cubans altogether, because for ideological reasons they refuse to fight for Mengistu's cause against secessionists in the northern region of Eritrea, and meanwhile have to be paid for. But he remains extremely dependant on the Russians, who supply him with weapons and expertise.

Mengistu's Marxist commitment is thought to be less than absolute. Britain is one country which over the last year has been moving slowly towards a better relationship with the Addis regime, after a long period of mutual suspicion and mistrust. The settlement of a long-standing claim against the Ethiopians by the cotton and trading group Mitchell Cotts - disposed of in the 1974 revolution - removed one obstacle to an Anglo-Ethiopian rapprochement. Annual amnesties granted by the Dergue to political

prisoners, including some of the deposed royal family, have also helped, although many remain behind bars.

Earlier this year Mr Malcolm Rifkind, junior minister at the Foreign Office, carried the process a little further by announcing during a visit to Addis Ababa that Britain was erasing a £2.5m debt owed by the Ethiopians. Then came worsening reports of the famine.

The Dergue is unlikely to cut its ties with Moscow, but the effects of the drought have created dependence on the West for emergency aid. Britain alone has contributed more than £11m during the past two months, a figure dwarfed by the American contribution. The Soviets have been forced to respond for political and humanitarian reasons.

The recent visit by Mengistu to Moscow and the grudging publicity which has been given by the Ethiopian press to western aid suggests a certain embarrassment over this position but this enforced reliance on western countries will almost certainly have to grow if the Dergue is serious about preventing a future famine of such dimensions. Memories of the fate of Haile

Selassie mean that Colonel Mengistu, for all the support he gets from the army, can hardly ignore the consequences of a reputation.

Meanwhile refugees from Eritrea and Tigre continue to pour into pro-western Sudan where President Numeiry, in conflict with rebels in the south and crippled by debt, has problems of his own.

Western governments are concerned that the fall of Numeiry to left-wing forces could create a "red ring" from Libya in the north-west to Ethiopia in the south-east, and over the Gulf of Aden to South Yemen. This possibility also causes great alarm in their ally Egypt, which depends heavily on the Nile basin for its survival. A pro-western Sudan, where the Blue and White Nile meet at Khartoum, is of crucial importance to the present government in Cairo.

Studies now being made by bodies such as the World Bank and the EEC of Ethiopia's long-term development requirements have a predominantly humanitarian appeal. But politics lie close to the surface, as East and West struggle to win friends and influence people in the coveted Horn.

Amid the palms, an unlikely literary bloom

Monaco Prince Rainier of Monaco has recently seen his principality grow by 50 acres of land reclaimed from the Mediterranean. A new stadium of more than Olympic dimensions has risen in the last couple of years to house Monaco's championship-calibre soccer team. Construction continues under the "Rock" of ancient Monaco and on the hills behind, and the soft drop of chips on the croupiers' tables is complemented by the constant hum of building.

Against all that excitement, the palace is proudest of two rooms recently converted from an old residence on the Rock of Monaco Ville. Those rooms house the Princess Grace Irish Library, an unexpected scholastic venture which boasts the clamorous support of such famous local residents as Anthony Burgess.

Indeed, Mr Burgess has gone so far as to promise in *The Irish Times* that he would sit down at the piano in the music room and pound out some of the more than 2,000 Irish songs collected as sheet music by the late Princess Grace for any visitors who happened to be around. His even more rash claim that most of those traditional songs can be found in Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* has set the library's director, Dr Georges Sandulesco, the lengthy task of researching the claim.



Princess Grace: her own collection. Burgess: keyboard offer

Dr Sandulesco has the right background to head an Irish library on the Mediterranean. He is a Swede born in Romania of a Greek mother who studied at Leeds and Essex and published books about Joyce. He sees his primary job in the first month of the library's operation as making it known to other libraries, and to publishers and collectors who might see fit to bolster the present collection.

The core of the library, funded by the Princess Grace Foundation, is Princess Grace's own private collection of books about Ireland, begun in the 1960s after the birth of her children.

That American search for



European roots may have partly accounted for the Princess's assembly of books and music manuscripts about Ireland. The private motivation is honoured in the library by the random arrangement of books, on bookshelves copied from those in the Princess's study, so that a copy of *The Book of Kells* nestles next to a topographical dictionary of Ireland. Prince Rainier has augmented the collection with more than 150 books from the palace archives; his contribution includes some exceptionally rare and valuable volumes, the oldest being an atlas of Ireland published in Amsterdam in 1654 and written in Spanish.

For all the charm of the present

randomness of the collection, Mrs Paul Gallico, one of the five trustees, speaks of the need for planning sensible acquisitions. With the announcement of the official opening on November 20, gifts began to appear from sympathetic readers. They include an inscribed copy of *How It Is* sent by Samuel Beckett and an Irish translation of the Bible contributed by the Irish American Cultural Committee. If the library is to make such possessions part of a useful as well as valuable resource, gaps will have to be filled.

The idea of an Irish cultural retreat in the south of France has touched not only literary sensibilities but also received the endorsement of the whiskey-loving Jameson Irish Club of the Riviera. Apart from the sound of Anthony Burgess at the piano, it will also sport such events as a three-day conference on the works of James Joyce in May. Irish plays will not remain idly on the shelves, either: already there are plans to stage the Irish-American plays of Princess Grace's Pulitzer Prize-winning uncle, George Kelly.

The real contribution of the library will be the infusion of Irish culture into that rich mix which already includes Monaghanese, French, Italian and the legacy of the Ballets Russes.

Ned Chaillet

David Watt

Convicted of failure to debate

Somewhere amid the haze of Christmas homilies I seem to recollect the Prime Minister remarking, once again, that she was unashamedly a "conviction politician" and that therefore it was no use asking her to change her mind about something or other. This has been said so often that it has achieved folklore status.

What is more she herself and all her advisers and propagandists obviously revel in it. It is all part of the Iron-Lady's-not-for-turning image. "Conviction" is fashionable because it is set up as being synonymous with "resolution", and contrary to "cynical weakness."

Having spent hundreds and thousands of words in the 1960s and '70s denouncing the superficialities and evasions of Labour governments, and praying for some principled administration, I cannot say that I am anxious to return to those days. All the same, my own hope for British politics in 1985 is that we should have a bit less conviction and a lot more of what Dr David Owen called for in an article the other day - namely reason and debate.

In theory, of course, there is nothing to prevent conviction, principle, reason and debate all going hand in hand, providing that conviction is defined as "belief produced by careful enquiry and exhaustive examination of alternatives."

To say of Mrs Thatcher that she is a "conviction politician" might mean no more than that she holds (carefully thought-out) views with loach-like tenacity. But the more natural interpretation - that she is a politician who thinks with her stomach first and rationalizes later - is close to the point. As Professor Robert Skidelsky interestingly argues in the current issue of *Encounter*, she has, throughout her prime ministership, built on a few very simple beliefs, some taken from her own rather Poujadist background, others drawn loosely from the experience of her formative political years under the Wilson and Heath governments: Britain needs the Great put back; inflation is too high; the trades unions are too powerful; the state is too large.

To these axioms Mr Skidelsky might have added the "convictions" that many bureaucrats are superfluous paper-shufflers, most foreigners are unreliable and nearly all coloured foreigners are on the scrounge. But the general thesis is correct. Apart from these foundation stones, everything and everyone else that is normally associated with Thatcherism - monetarist doctrine, privatization, Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, Peter Bauer, *et hoc genus omne* - were amply convenient to implement and justify her intuitions but they were really afterthoughts as far as she was concerned.

By now, of course, they have been built into a large edifice of doctrine complete with sacred flame. But some ministers at this shrine have a sneaking doubt that the High Priestess is capable of burning down the whole pile, with them inside if somebody plausible came along and showed that this would achieve her intuited ends with less complication and expense than the present arrangements.

This kind of conviction politics has its advantages. You can't argue with convictions in Mrs Thatcher's sense; they are revealed truth.

Moreover, if you try to rely on bad reasoning - let us say that "the value of the pound in your pocket will not be affected by devaluation" - people can rattle you at once, as they did Wilson. If, on the other hand, you can project an image of being ready to suffer for your beliefs, however daft or dangerous, a lot of people will be impressed by the force of your sincerity and Saatchi and Saatchi will have something to sell.

Several centuries of British anti-intellectual tradition, as well as the temper of the present times, are also behind you. The idea that brains are not only inferior but are actually detrimental to "character", the notion that leaders undermine their officer-like qualities by intellectual "doubts", the admiration that is extended in this rootless age to anyone who appears to be absolutely sure of anything, be he the Rev. Moon, Ayatollah Khomeini or Arthur Scargill - all these lie behind the aggrandisement of "conviction" politics.

These names ought to be enough in themselves to promote a little caution about the general proposition that nothing is worse than lack of conviction. We ought to have learned by the bitter experience of the last 50 years that plenty of things come into the category of irrational conviction: fanaticism, self-righteousness, dogmatism, philistinism and rigidity among them.

Those limitations and drawbacks will certainly be tested in the British political contest this year. For the simple reason that Mrs Thatcher's original, simple convictions have taken her about as far as they can, without jostling each other and without needing more than sincerity to justify them politically. Putting the Great back into Great Britain, for instance, has hitherto meant that the Falklands are and always will be British and that we need the Trident nuclear missile system; but our ability to follow these prescriptions and also succeed in the other aims of curbing inflation and the public sector is virtually exhausted. How can we make room for "enterprise" according to Thatcherite principles without (in defiance of past promises and present political prudence) encroaching on the welfare state and/or the interests of that middle-class who are the only people who share Mrs Thatcher's convictions in their pristine form?

Nobody supposes that 1985 will see a radical change of direction. Like the Macbeths, the Prime Minister and her government are now, so to speak, "in blood steypt" so far that, should they waste no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er. Or, to put it in modern parlance, a U-turn is not on, because it would cost more in credibility than it would gain in goodwill. Nor am I arguing that Mrs Thatcher will not need convictions if she is to continue to lead a radical government in the general direction she wants. What I do believe, though, is that from now on conviction by itself will not be enough. To convince her backbenchers as well as an increasingly sceptical country she needs arguments and debate.

The real trouble with conviction politics, from the point of view of the practical politician, is that it is all right while faith lasts, but when blind belief filters in the light of real-life difficulties, your flock have nothing solid to fall back on. That is where the Prime Minister finds herself today.

Philip Howard

Now, Icarus, don't be so ridiculous

If the Lord had meant us to fly, he would have created us with wings. Icarus is a feathered parable of this proposition. No, not Icarus the Cretan boy on unfaithful wings who, according to Bragg, fell into the sea near Delos without causing much of a splash for the locals; but Icarus the budgeter. In November our household herd of livestock was increased by the birth of two budgeters, in the cage on top of the television set, Icarus a boy, and Iris a girl. For the prurient or curious non-budgeter-fancying classes, I explain that the sex of budgeters is discriminated more conveniently than most other species: the genders have different coloured beaks, which is not always the case with humans.

Iris was perfectly formed, if you recognize perfection in such matters. But Icarus, by some genetic flaw, was born without wings or tail. He quickly became extremely agile, puffing himself all round the cage and on to the little swings and perches by his beak and claws. He needed to become nimble. For thirty days his father, Tereus, was a model parent, masticating millet for the chicks to eat, and proudly chattering over them like a tiny parrot. But after that he decided it was time they left home and set a robust example to dotting human parents by chasing his offspring all over the cage, with the intention of expelling them, if not worse. Icarus became extremely quick on his beak.

The story has a happy ending. Iris and he were removed to share a cage with a gentle female canary called Celandine. But Icarus has become so expert with his beak and claws that he is the only budgie in creation who can open doors with them. Nature compensates for defects. If you forget to tie the door of the cage firmly, as soon as you leave the room, Icarus opens the door and launches himself into space, falling six feet vertically on his head on the carpet. The girls sit on their perches by the open door, twittering and preening. Icarus insists on trying to fly, without the equipment.

I see various instances in this everyday parable of budgie life in Notting Hill Gate. I am in a way about keeping creatures caged in a room proportionately the size of my study for the rest of their lives without books or music. And I am not persuaded by the argument that having been born for captivity, they would not last five minutes outside the window, and Icarus, who seems to be the only one eager to give freedom a go, would fall thirty feet onto the pavement for the dustmen.

Until this winter I did not share Icarus's urge to fly. Flying was for the birds, at any rate those born with wings. I reckoned. This was not because of any abnormal fear of flying. I confess to a certain unease at the recent innovation of playing cheap, cheerful music during the critical periods of landing and take-off; I consider that their ridiculous customer psychology classes have made British Airways patronizing and twee.

But the principal reason that I choose to travel to darkest Ayrshire by car rather than air is that flying costs ten times as much. This mid-winter I have had to commute between London and Ayrshire faster than a weaver's shuttle for bicentenary purposes. The only way to do it was by air. And remarkable it is. You can leave pitch-dark Abbotsinch at 7.10 and be on the ground at Heathrow by 8.10, having been urged to eat *en passage* a complex breakfast consisting of fruit juice, cornflakes in impregnable packet, milk in all too pregnable a container, hot black puddings and gammon with what appear to be hominy grits, bun sautéed in plastic to baffle Houdini, butter wrapped so that you use it as nail varnish, etc.

But it is no small beauty to see the dawn rise over the horizon, Oxford changing to Cambridge blue, apricot, and rosy-buttocked. And it is terrifying how small our island is. You are hardly up and gingerly into the black puddings when there are the lights of Manchester flashing past below the starboard wing. Flying has its uses. But no real good will come of it. If they had flown, Johnson and Boswell would never have had time to notice anything on their jaunt to the Hebrides. Back to the bus, chaps.





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MORE ABOUT US

Burke's age of sophists and calculators has long been upon us, and there are those who regret the sometimes promiscuous inquisitiveness of the data-gatherers, civil servant and market researcher alike...

happy marriage of the rigorous series on births and deaths with the slippery numbers that represent our best efforts at measuring such qualities as altruism (blood donations, time spent in voluntary work)...

Although Social Trends does not, in itself, justify the large investment of public money which, despite Rayner scrutiny and other reviews, still goes into the various series of official figures, including the expensive interview and sampling work contained in the General Household Survey...

Beyond that the Government has a duty to measure and assess the impact of its various policies. If the Government aims to loosen the bonds of district and region as part of economic

regeneration, then figures on mobility are needed. Social Trends will, on these lines, make ambiguous reading for ministers. Britain's vital signs are healthy, the purveyors of gloom notwithstanding; not only real disposable income and material possessions but the indices of environmental pollution and physical well-being show recent improvement...

Should ministers take comfort from figures (for example for crime) which once-for-all kill the association so fashionably made a decade ago between high levels of unemployment and social disorganisation? They might; but they also have to live with other revelations from Social Trends. Where are the signs of a society girding itself for economic trial?

LOOPHOLE WAGON

The search for the practicable electric car has been like the search for the Philosopher's Stone through almost the whole of the hundred-year history of the motor car. Electric power is quiet, pollution-free and in principle cheaper than the theoretically more laborious practice of setting fire to refined vapours in confined spaces and converting the blast into rotary motion...

cessors, though allegedly extremely cheap to operate. It does not pretend to do a car's job. In price and capacity, it is closest to the moped bicycle, which has a better turn of speed but has never enjoyed more than moderate favour in the British climate.

It is in fact a loophole vehicle, devised to take advantage of changes made in the law in 1983. Since then it has been possible to run small electric vehicles on the highway without road tax, licence or compulsory insurance. In theory, there are many advantages in machines which take up so little room on the road and in the car park, which spread no fumes and are incapable of that burst of irascible acceleration which leads to so many accidents...

floats) and free to park anywhere, regardless of yellow lines, meters or wheel-clamps.

The prospect gives reason for concern as well as curiosity. It is hard to predict how safe such a vehicle will be in heavy traffic, when anybody over 14 will be free to drive it without test or insurance. It is true that its speed will not be much greater than that of a push-bike, which children may ride on the open road, and do, often at some danger to themselves and others. Mopeds of up to 125cc can also be driven without a test, if L-plates are carried, and they are capable of speeds of 65 mph or more. The new machine is likely to be less dangerous than most motor-bicycles, but this is not saying much, in a category which is involved in a quarter of all fatal accidents though it accounts for only three per cent of motor mileage. More than half of the motorcyclists killed on the roads are aged between 17 and 20. If an uninsured buggy does cause an accident, who will pay? Exempt from safeguards regarded as necessary for most other powered vehicles, the loophole wagon will deserve very close watching in its early months, to ensure that the exemptions are not harmful.

CENTRAL AMERICAN CONTAINMENT

It is elections rather than inaugurations that in recent years have attracted attention in Central America: governments seek legitimacy and their enemies at home and abroad seek by fair means and foul to deny it to them. Elections past, both El Salvador and Nicaragua have faded from the news. In the case of Nicaragua, the distant observer is tempted to dismiss the heightened tension that accompanied the predictable Sandinista majority as entirely artificial, the product of the United States administration's desire to discredit the elections, and of conflicts in Washington over Central American policy. That no MiGs arrived, that Mr Shultz has asserted greater control over rival policy makers, and that President Ortega is now formally taking office might be taken to mean that the crisis is over.

conciliation towards the United States over Nicaragua than the more prudent Cubans, is not going to spoil the Geneva mood for the sake of the Sandinistas. Mr Shultz is not going to give any encouragement to the more extreme designs of the contras and their exotic supporters. But much remains unchanged.

President Ortega's cabinet has not got a new face in it. There has been no significant shuffle. Tomas Borge remains Minister of the Interior, and the continued presence of three priests shows no concession to the Vatican or towards the majority of Nicaragua's clerical opinion. The announcement of economic improvement through a new planning commission directly responsible to the President looks like more of the medicine that bears a large part of the blame for current economic ills.

The rest of the blame is assigned to the contras' opposition. Recent signs of Honduran nervousness over their presence, damaging revelations in the US Congress and defection from

their ranks indicate that they may be in for a harder time in 1985. They have however shown that they can survive and inflict substantial damage without official US funds, and they have not been disavowed by President Reagan. They have recently been endorsed by Arturo Cruz of the opposition Co-ordinadora who doubts that the Sandinistas will change course except under pressure. The three contras groups have also put forward their joint plan for "national dialogue". It is an unpalatable fact that it is contra pressure that has made the Sandinistas more reasonable, with the paradoxical rider that it is contra pressure that they cannot be seen to yield and survive.

For the moment the Central American situation is contained. An international consensus supports President Duarte in El Salvador. President Ortega takes office in the presence among other officers of Mr Kinnoch. Mr Kinnoch would be wrong to conclude that the Sandinistas embody democracy, just as he is wrong to discern no east-west element in this conflict.

The deficit has thus not only fuelled one of the fastest cyclical upswings in US economic history, but has done so without preventing a decline in inflationary expectations, or at the very least without preventing a fall in interest rates as the upswing tapered off.

It would be good to see a humble word or two from the bevy of financial commentators, European officials and others who have unceasingly proclaimed over the past few years that all this couldn't happen and that fiscal stimulus can "lead only to accelerating inflation and higher interest rates" (as the authors of your amusing "open letter" on December 20 put it).

The damage done, by such dogmatic extremism varies from case to case. I will say only that in the United States its patent silliness may already have discredited more judicious warnings in the same general direction, and caused influential figures in the Administration to suppose that the existing US budget deficit can be maintained indefinitely without harm to financial stability.

Yours faithfully, PETER OPPENHEIMER, Christ Church, Oxford, December 27.

Cloud on future of art colleges

From the Principal of the Blackheath School of Art

Sir, The item by your Education Correspondent, Lucy Hodges (January 8), regarding the proposed merger of eight London art and design colleges into a new body to be called the London Institute, is of great interest at a time when the whole future of art and design education is under active consideration at many levels.

However, I am uncertain as to whether one should view this proposal with enthusiasm. It is far from clear that the merging of already substantial organisations into a monolith will be of benefit, particularly in the fields of art and design.

Talk of a "power house" and "thriving vigour" sounds very like the kind of public-relations language used to support the corporate mergers which were so popular in the 1960s, and which usually appear to have resulted in the creation of unwieldy and bureaucratic juggernauts.

It is difficult to see how the creation of this larger London Institute will do anything but increase the management and administration at the expense of the people who do the actual teaching.

Presumably more and more decisions will be taken away from the sites which are directly affected.

Free-standing art schools are becoming a rare and endangered species in this country. Such institutions cater for people with an aptitude and vocation for visual thinking and seem to work most effectively as reasonably small entities with a clear identity and well earned reputation for excellence.

The quality of an art school surely was not set on its size and the number of students or staff it employs, but on the quality of education offered. The "power house" could, I fear, turn out to be a bland and characterless colossus which simply does not work on the human scale. Yours faithfully, NICHOLAS MCKEMEY, Principal, The Blackheath School of Art, 21 Lee Road, SE3, January 8.

Power generation

From Dr Peter B. Baker

Sir, The achievement of the Central Electricity Generating Board in meeting a new record demand of 45,046MW today (January 8) is to be applauded on both technical and managerial grounds. But surely it is cause for concern that 10 years after the first oil crisis, when the finite nature of fossil fuel reserves was so dramatically brought home to the western world, we are still apparently increasing our use of electricity. This in spite of campaigns and exhortations to "Save it" and much higher standards of domestic and industrial insulation.

Yours faithfully, PETER B. BAKER, 9 Keatwell Road, Ealing, W5.

Cool appraisal

From Mr Robin Malcolm

Sir, Whilst I fully understand the "circus", or "dog eat dog" - nature of journalism in this day and age, I was amazed to read your back-page report today (January 8) headlined "Chill, American style". The weather, we are still apparently increasing our use of electricity. This in spite of campaigns and exhortations to "Save it" and much higher standards of domestic and industrial insulation.

Yours sincerely, R. MALCOLM, Editor, AM, London Broadcasting Co. Ltd, Gough Square, EC4.

Trees for burning

From Mr S. Blanche

Sir, The answer to Mr Bevin's question (December 29) on the disposal of uprooted trees is that no Government agency will undertake such a task as it would require an office block in a prime city site with a director, several deputy directors etc, to administer the free disposal of the logs, and it would probably cost the taxpayer thousands of pounds a week to achieve this end. Yours faithfully, S. BLANCHE, Blanche & Co., Thames House, Wellington Street, SE18.

Tab on teachers

From Mr David Flint

Sir, Yet again Sir Keith Joseph fires a broadside at incompetent teachers and by implication blames them for the failings he perceives in our education system. As a class teacher in a primary school I would like to put in him, publicly, a number of points. In the hierarchy of education I am at the bottom. Above me are a head teacher, a board of governors, education officers, local and government inspectors, a local education committee of the county council, officials of the DES and a secretary of state. Am I the only one of all these whose annual assessment of performance warrants legislation? I have no right to refuse a child entry to my class; I have no right to say in how large my class should be; I have no right to say in the equipping of my classroom; I have

Sleight of hand for Budget?

From Mr Harvey Cole

Sir, A dangerous myth is gaining acceptance. This suggests that movements in the exchange rate with the dollar are likely to offset movements in the market price of oil, so that there is little or no reason for any national concern over trends in the oil and the foreign exchange markets.

Indeed, indifference is being deliberately encouraged in some quarters. It is pointed out that, provided sterling depreciates faster than the dollar price of oil, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have more money to "give away" in income-tax cuts in March.

Since mid-November the pound has fallen from around \$1.26 to about \$1.15. Oil has fallen more slowly - from around \$28 to \$26.50 a barrel. But its sterling cost has therefore gone up from about £22.20 to £23 a barrel.

This four per cent rise is worth some £600 million to the Government in additional revenue from the North Sea. But Mr Lawson needs to think twice - or more - before assuming he can blithely add this to the cuts in income tax on which he is single-mindedly relying to reduce unemployment. Day-to-day variations in the figures do not affect the argument.

Apart from the possibility of recent trends being reversed, the

whole thing is little more than an optical illusion anyway. The mirror image of the rise in petroleum revenues is an increase in the sterling cost of oil to consumers in this country - of rather more than £600 million. All that is happening as sterling falls faster than oil is a transfer of cash from consumers to Government.

To have this back in form of income-tax cuts changes nothing - particularly as the beneficiaries will be outnumbered by those left facing the higher costs.

All that any Budget based on these lines will achieve is an extension of the principle of pushing up the costs of certain goods and services which everybody has to pay, so as to finance cuts in income tax. Mr Lawson's constructive accountancy has already forced up prices of gas, electricity and water to fund higher tax thresholds - and is desperately selling off public assets and shareholdings to maintain the momentum.

It is time to stop admiring the speed and sleight of the Chancellor's hand: more than the eye is being deceived by his destructive fudging of the national accounts.

Yours &c, HARVEY COLE, 9 Clifton Road, Winchester, Hampshire, January 8.

Nuclear deterrence

From Lord Gladwyn

Sir, How would you react to the following propositions?

1. If both the USA and the USSR achieve, by the end of the century, immunity from nuclear attack, what is still to deter the outbreak of some East/West war in which western Europe, even if not overrun, might well be largely destroyed by cruise and low-trajectory nuclear missiles that could not possibly be covered by the SDI (strategic defence initiative)?

2. If, on the other hand, the USA eventually achieves comparative, if not total, immunity which the USSR does not, are not the Russians, theoretically at least, at the total mercy of the Americans? How do you suppose the Politburo would react to such a threat?

3. If, contrariwise, the Americans do not achieve complete nuclear immunity, even after the expenditure of countless billions of dollars, would not a consequent weakening

of the US economy, hence of American "conventional" resources, unfavourably affect the whole Western Alliance?

4. In any case, if MAD (mutual assured destruction), the whole concept of equality, is now to be consciously abandoned, does not this imply that we are in for an uncontrollable arms race, as a result of which - long before the end of the century - the Soviet Union either surrenders its position as a world power (and probably disintegrates) or is defeated by military means? Is either contingency probable?

No doubt the Europeans are in a weak position to insist that the SDI should be traded away in the forthcoming negotiations, if the Americans decline to do anything of the sort. But SDI is also opposed by many Americans - perhaps even a majority in Congress. So there seems to be no reason why the Europeans should not at least be allowed their say.

Yours faithfully, GLADWYN, Bramfield Hall, Halesworth, Suffolk.

Reform in S. Africa

From Mr Donald Woods

Sir, In his letter (December 27) on economic pressure against the South African Government, James Barber, Master of Hatfield College, left out the most important argument for such pressures - the psychological impact sanctions would have on Pretoria.

One of the myths Pretoria fosters abroad is that sanctions would lead to increased white intransigence, yet the record of sanctions in sport and travel suggests otherwise, and apartheid intensification over the past 15 years has coincided almost precisely with peaks of investment and lending from abroad. The last billion-dollar IMF loan to Pretoria coincided with a billion-dollar increase in the South African police and military budget.

But it is not only in the interests of black South Africans that the West should adopt a harder line against apartheid - it is in the West's own interests. Increasingly per-

ceived by all Africa and the Third World as sympathetic to the wrong side in the escalating conflict in South Africa, the West is becoming increasingly alienated from that country's black majority, a fact no doubt noted with satisfaction by elements favouring an Eastern orientation for post-apartheid South Africa.

Yet another reason for such pressure is that it is the only remaining non-violent means of compelling Pretoria to what is surely the most desirable of all peaceful peace in South Africa - the negotiating table. If we want to save the lives of many young white and black South Africans now preparing for war we require a policy of constructive disengagement from the economic and diplomatic underpinnings of the apartheid superstructure.

What is needed is an economic and diplomatic version of the Geneva Accords. DONALD WOODS, Director, The Lincoln Trust, 42 Camden Square, NW1.

Starved on the circuits

From Mrs Laetitia Gifford

Sir, In March, 1985, as you report on December 28 and 29, British Film Year will be launched with the slogan "Cinema: the best place to see a film". As the manager of a small, independent cinema I am, of course, enthusiastic for the success of the campaign, but not optimistic unless the distributors decide to reverse their policy of "take the money and run".

During the last week I have been sent a film with damaged sound track which, as we have just spent a lot of money installing stereo sound, a neighbouring exhibitor has had to drive 50 miles to borrow from me a film which we are showing in a week's time because the copy he was sent was too badly damaged to be screened.

A film for a Christmas show failed to arrive; another, wildly unsuitable, was sent instead. Apologies for your title was not available. We hope this substitute will be acceptable. (So much for a contract.)

Meanwhile the distributors' policy to make only sufficient prints to supply their circuits when films are new means that independent cinemas are chronically starved of films which their local public would come to see, encouraged by publicity. This has gone cold by the time the films are available for the independents.

Of course I realise that Ghostbusters

will take far more money in Birmingham than in Aldeburgh, but I am afraid that unless the distributors are prepared to forgo a little of that money now, and spend it on increased efficiency, the British Film Year, with its avowed aim of increasing cinema audiences by 49 per cent is a bad joke.

Yours faithfully, LAETITIA GIFFORD, Chairman, The Aldeburgh Cinema Ltd., High Street, Aldeburgh, Suffolk.

Toll of congestion

From Mr L. A. O. Jenkins

Sir, M25 users who queue daily at the Dartford Tunnel will be pleased to know that, at the cost of several million pounds and extreme road works congestion for two years, some relief to the problem may be expected when the number of toll booths is doubled.

However, it would perhaps be a further reassurance if it could be explained also what plans are envisaged to prevent frequent collisions - the inevitable result of 12 lanes of lorries and cars converging into just two, in the space of just a few hundred yards, prior to entering the tunnel.

Yours faithfully, L. A. O. JENKINS, 11 Banckside, Harley, Dartford, Kent.

another form of assessment will help me to do a better job for the children in my class.

I spend 25 hours a week with over 30 children and I have no receptionist, no secretary and no nurse to call upon for help, and I am still expected to deal with each child as an individual.

Twenty years ago there was a handful of educational advisers in Northamptonshire. Now there are twenty local "inspectors" of education. I feel sufficiently inspected and assessed. What I feel the need for is some support and assistance that will make some real improvement in what I am able to do for the children I teach.

Yours faithfully, DAVID FLINT, 30 Blackmile Lane, Grendon, Northampton, January 1.

ON THIS DAY

JANUARY 11 1946 (UNITED NATIONS)

The United Nations formally came into existence on October 24 1945. The General Assembly first met on January 10 1946 at Central Hall, Westminster, London when representatives of 615 members were present. One hundred and fifty nine states are now members.

From our Uno Correspondent

The first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization was formally opened and began its historic talks yesterday afternoon. After hearing speeches by Dr Eduardo Zuleta Angel, chairman of the Preparatory Commission and acting chairman of the Assembly, and by Mr Zuleta, the Prime Minister, delegates proceeded to the election of its first president. This produced an early surprise, as the election was contested. The Assembly will resume its work at 10.15 this morning.

The scene inside Central Hall, Westminster, for the opening ceremony was brilliant and impressive. The floor of the hall was occupied by the delegates of the 51 members of Uno - among them many of the foreign ministers and leading statesmen of the world. Memories of Geneva were revived by the presence of some who played their part in the League of Nations, also brought into being on January 10, exactly 25 years before. The beautiful flowing robes and the headdress of keffiyeh and agal of the Saudi Arabian delegates harmonized with the delicate setting of the occasion.

The contrast to Geneva was, however, immediate and important. When the League was launched neither the United States nor Russia was a member - to-day both countries, exercising a power greater than any they have hitherto known, are members of the United Nations, have played an essential part in its creation, and will be called on to shoulder a cardinal share of its responsibilities.

Many public figures were in the distinguished visitors' gallery - among them the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Addison, Lord Samuel, Lord Glyn, the Prime Minister, General Sir Archibald Nye, Marshal of the R.A.F. Sir Arthur Tedder, and Admiral H. Kent Hewitt, commanding the United States fleet in European waters. Mrs. Attlee occupied a seat in the front row of the gallery. The Press and public galleries were filled with many standing. Several members of the public had queued all night for admission.

THE OPENING SPEECHES

The chair was taken shortly before 4 o'clock by Dr. Zuleta. An animated scene lay before the platform, with photographers at the foot of the Press gallery, and a brief pause, as the delegation, but at two minutes after the hour the hum of conversation ceased suddenly when the chairman rapped twice with his mallet, and asked delegates to be seated. A brief pause, and he added "Ladies and gentlemen, the Assembly is opened". Thus, in this quiet way, the work begun at Dumbarton Oaks and fashioned at San Francisco came to fruit. Dr. Zuleta's own speech, in French, followed. His affirmation of the purposes for which the United Nations had been brought into being held the attention of the Assembly throughout.

After Dr. Zuleta came Mr. Attlee. Both as he walked to the rostrum and at the close of his speech, the Prime Minister was warmly applauded. He recalled how, too, had been associated with the San Francisco conference, and reminded the Assembly that the freedom of the individual in the State was an essential complement to the freedom of the State in the world community of nations. With the coming of the atomic bomb, it was for the people of the world to make their own choice of life and death. He had no use for the sceptics and the pessimists, and he called for a spirit of hope as well as determination. In a fine closing passage the Prime Minister gave the Assembly "gathered in this ancient home of liberty and order" - this watchword. "We must and will succeed".

Road traffic offences

From Police Constable A. G. Rayner

Sir, The Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1984 created offences of failing to display front and rear position lamps (sideights) and headlamps in conditions of bad visibility. Regrettably, they do not attract penalty points.

What constitutes visibility of a sufficiently poor level to require lamps is left to the discretion of the individual police officer. If the quality of his evidence is good enough a conviction will result.

Surely a minimum offence could be created of driving at an excessive speed having regard to visibility? The burden of proof need be no more severe than for the lighting offences where a subjective judgment is accepted.

As to exceeding speed limits on motorways and elsewhere, why not make an existing penalty option of a fine and discretionary disqualification into mandatory disqualification for a short period? Yours faithfully, A. G. RAYNER, 6 Burton Close, Corringham, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex.

Late bird

From Mrs Jane Stockwell

Sir, At 8.30 this evening I discovered that The Times Portfolio dividend matched my total. Do I qualify as the first cuckoo of Spring? Yours faithfully, JANE STOCKWELL, 10 Alford Close, Guildford, Surrey, January 7.

Honey for jam

From Dr A. C. Cattanach

Sir, You report (January 8) that we eat more honey and less marmalade. It comes as no surprise. One knows that there will be no peel in honey whereas the uncertainty that there will be any peel in today's "good" marmalades is positively unnerving at breakfast.

The only certainty about marmalade is that it comes in smaller jars at a greater price. Yours faithfully, A. C. CATTANACH, 3 Hale Gardens, New Milton, Hampshire.

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

Confusing pictures from a dimmed Thorn EMI

Two of Britain's largest companies, Thorn EMI and Land Securities, met quite heavily yesterday in a market more or less committed to vertical take-off. Their experience, emphasizes yet again, that stock market assessments are now a ruthless leveller. Companies with under-performing managements must expect rough treatment at the hands of analysts and fund managers.

Thorn EMI has spent some months sweet-talking the City about its problems, and the interim pre-tax profit of £40.2 million, down £15 million, compared with 1983/84, was broadly in line with expectations. Nevertheless, the shares fell from 477p to 467p.

Thorn produced a more helpful divisional breakdown of its figures than usual, then invited the analysts to chat about the results. Clearly they were unimpressed by what they heard.

The shares have underperformed by close on 50 per cent in the last year. This is not a pretty performance, bearing in mind that last July Thorn raised £141 million of fresh equity capital.

The Thorn strategy looks fairly straightforward. The group is keen to stay in high technology areas, witness its expensive £125 million bid for chip-maker Immos. Such capital intensive ventures can be funded by cash flow from more mature businesses like music and TV rental.

Meanwhile a refurbished Thorn board under the leadership of chief executive Peter Laister, believes it can cope with any transitional problems, behind a "Business as Usual" stance. Mr Laister called the last six months a time of consolidation. This is a euphemism after the havoc wreaked in the consumer electronics division in general, and in the Ferguson subsidiary in particular, by Japanese competition.

Ferguson has been hit by overcapacity, and a price war signalled by the split between GEC and Hitachi. Volumes in the large screen TV business fell by something like a third. The entire pricing structure of the market appears to have been torpedoed. Thorn's stocks have climbed by £100 million in the last six months when Ferguson tumbled into losses. A far cry from the boom £25 million of profit it made the previous year.

Thorn is now deeply troubled about the most appropriate way of handling the changed situation. On the one hand, Mr Laister acknowledges that the last six months have been a major setback. The problems will not disappear overnight. Capacity underutilization will remain. Yet while claiming that Ferguson has a strategic future, he also suggested yesterday that if Ferguson does not prove to be a good business, then the group might dispose of it.

It is easy to sympathize with Mr Laister's dilemma. The market wants rapid action on a subsidiary which suffered a £13 million downturn in the last six months, and may now be making losses in excess of £10 million a year. Yet asking Ferguson would cut the ground from under Thorn's strategy. The easy cash flow from the rental business is based on access to in-house set, production by Ferguson. Buying in TV sets from outside might hit rental margins hard.

Thorn also faces problems on two other fronts - cash and product. On the music side, a near £6 million slide into losses of £4.2 million is attributable to heavy losses in the US, where Capital Records made the wrong sound. In domestic appliances, a new cooker may have missed the boat. In consumer electronics, the group is doing well with small screen televisions, but complaining about the margins.

Cash is tight, evidenced by the rise in interest costs of £5 million to £23.2 million, and a substantial rise in borrowings, matched presumably against stocks. Some analysts expect year-end borrowings to rise by about £70 million to close on £400 million.

Not surprisingly, Thorn group is talking about restricting capital expenditure to obvious growth areas. But Immos is facing tough trading. According to Mr Laister, "Sales have held up well in the face of the anticipated present market weakness". Such doleful remarks hardly convey the flavour of a pulse-racing drive into a new growth area.

Some analysts claim that the shares are a buy, arguing that the management can and will cope. Others are sceptical about the new board's ability to plan its way through the current trough. The opportunity, failed bid for British Aerospace can now be seen as a measure of the corner into which the company has got itself.

Shares in Land Securities, our largest property concern by far, dropped 6p to 302p and have fallen six per cent in three weeks. The impending asset valuation currently being prepared by Knight Frank and Rutley for the year-end on March 13, will be significant. Notional figures are now being trimmed. Yields on non-prime properties are being talked upwards, and valuation of the group's large holdings of office blocks built in the 1960s is not easy.

A lower-than-expected valuation might reflect awareness of the heavy refurbishment costs needed to bring these buildings up to modern standard. Land Securities' liquid funds are low. (Chris Turner of Laing Cruickshank puts them no higher than £35 million, a tiny figure compared with the market capitalization of £1.6 billion.)

A debenture issue might be the way out but this would be a bold initiative if the net asset value comes out at less than 400p.

Chinese walls make insecure houses

The debate over the future of the Stock Exchange went quiet over much of December, but should stir over the next couple of months. Progress has to be resumed soon if Sir Nicholas Goodison, the chairman of the Stock Exchange, is to fulfill his 1983 promise to Mr Cecil Parkinson, then Trade Secretary, that broker's fixed commissions will be abandoned by the end of next year.

But there are signs that the long haul has taken a toll of mental stamina. This week we have been treated to the sight of the Stock Exchange Council, the ruling body, spending two days without reaching a decision on the central question of how outsiders might be admitted to the club without diluting the communal goodwill possessed by the existing members.

Yesterday the Council for the Securities Industry, in one of its dying breaths, attempted to enclose in a code inscrutable Chinese Walls the quaint pre-school euphemism for conflicts of interest.

It is said that the Stock Exchange Council's bigger brothers have been bending over backwards to accommodate the smaller fry on the terms to let in outsiders. Partners in most of the large firms have of course already negotiated for themselves substantial sums from banks and other bodies eager to acquire an established presence in the stock market. Smaller firms have not been as fortunate.

The strength of the rank and file is that a 75 per cent vote is required to make the constitutional changes necessary for large firms to fulfil their contractual obligations to their putative parents. But the assets of the Stock Exchange are unsealable and each member's share is worth only as much as the member who owns it. Time is on the side of the big guns.

The CSI's philosophical dissertation will, it may be ventured, become a late relic of the old days. After urging support for the equivalent of motherhood and apple pie in securities trading, it is as good as admits that firms will have to be on their honour not to grow creepers over or make chinks in Chinese Walls except when they are allowed. It amounts to a charter for the very thing the City abhors: a Securities Commission with dragon's teeth.

Times securities conference

The timing could not be bettered, nor the practical importance of the subject exaggerated, of the securities conference The Times has arranged in conjunction with leading accountants, Peat Marwick. The conference which will take place at the InterContinental Hotel, London, on Tuesday, February 5, will examine the operation and regulation of the securities market in the light of significant changes that have recently taken place and are about to take place.

Distinguished speakers, each an expert in his field, will look at the implications for the City, professional advisers, directors of quoted companies and owners of companies considering going public, of the latest legislation, the revised Stock Exchange "Yellow Book" and the forthcoming White Paper.

They include Robin Broadley (Baring Brothers), Martin Gibbs (Phillips & Drew), Robin Hodgson (NASDIM), Richard Lloyd (Hill Samuel), Michael Newmarch (Prudential) and Peter Walker, the Secretary of State for Energy.

A complete prospectus is available from: Mrs P. D. Austin, Peat Marwick, No 1, Puddle Dock, Blackfriars, London, EC4V 3PD.

Pound plunges to \$1.1330 as oil uncertainties increase

By David Young and David Smith

The pound plunged to new lows yesterday, the sterling index falling 0.7 to 71.6, and the pound dropping 98 points to \$1.1330 against the dollar, after trading at \$1.1300.

Sterling's across-the-board fall was attributed to the Government's apparent lack of concern for the pound's international level and renewed oil uncertainties, coming to a head with afternoon rumours, later denied, that Nigeria is about to withdraw from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

A Ministry of Information official in Lagos called the rumours false and said that Nigeria's delegation would attend the next scheduled meeting of Opec and "continue to play a full part".

However, the rise in spot market prices caused by the cold weather and from which Opec has been drawing some comfort seems to have been halted. It has consistently been Opec's view that the worsening weather would lead to restocking by industrialized countries with prices moving upwards.

In Rotterdam yesterday the price per barrel of North Sea Brent crude for loading in February was \$26.20, compared with \$26.60 the previous day. The new price is \$2.45 below the official price set for British North Sea crude by the Government trading operation, the British National Oil Corporation.

BNOOC has still to set an official price for the first quarter of this year, seemingly being prepared to accept losses by buying oil in at its previous rate of \$28.65 and selling more than half of its 1.3 million barrels a day purchases at a loss at spot market related prices.

BNOOC appears to have ruled out being a price leader and instead will wait until after the next emergency meeting of Opec, scheduled for January 28, and to follow any official price cut made by the organization. Unless the demand for oil goes against most official predictions and starts to rise dramatically within the next two weeks, Opec will be faced with making more than a cosmetic change to its price



Tam David-West, Nigeria's oil minister.

structure as it did in December and having to announce a full scale price reduction.

Traders in Rotterdam yesterday suggested that consumers had already discounted the effects of the colder weather with stocks, especially in the United States, rising again. The Nigerian Government said last night that there was no truth in the rumours of its

withdrawal from Opec and that travel and accommodation arrangements are now being made for Professor Tam David-West, the country's oil minister, to lead the Nigerian delegation at the next Opec meetings.

Nigeria has been out of step with its Opec colleagues on pricing since September when it followed Norway, and then Britain with a cut in its official price. Its Bonny Light crude is now officially trading at 30 cents below the Opec marker of \$29 and its output quota has been left unchanged for over two years while other members, with the exception of Iraq, have had output limited by Opec.

Trading in sterling yesterday was described as "one way traffic" by one dealer.

The authorities may have intervened to smooth the pound's fall, but any intervention was modest.

Mr David Morrison, of the brokers Simon & Coates, said the fall was looking like "the early stages of a sterling crisis", with "the pound going headlong for parity with the dollar".

Trident TV stake sold

United Newspapers has sold its entire holding of shares in Trident Television, the gaming and leisure group, to a number of investors, realizing a profit of £4.2 million. United owned 8.5 per cent of the ordinary shares and 5.2 per cent of the "A" ordinary shares.

Mr David Stevens, United's chairman, said the company decided to sell the stake when Trident ceased to be a television company. "We were just waiting for the right price," he said.

United, which sold the shares for 176p each, still owns directly large share stakes in Yorkshire Television and True Tees Television and intends to retain these investments.

Profit jump

Electronic Rentals Group, which runs the Visionhire chain of TV and video rental outlets, has reported a pretax profit of £7.5 million for the six months to September 30, 1984, up from £4.4 million. The interim dividend of 1.166p is unchanged. *Temps, page 17*

Agency ahead

Valin Pollen, the USM-quoted public relations agency, made pretax profits of £603,000 in the year to September 30, 1984, against £275,000 in 1983. The total dividend was 4.2p. *Temps, page 17*

Bid backed

The board of Sir Joseph Causton & Sons, the printing and publishing group, yesterday recommended its shareholders to accept a £21 million takeover bid from Norton Opax, another printing company.

Broker stake?

Buckmaster and Moore, the stockbroker, is believed to be about to announce that an Austrian bank is buying a 20 per cent stake in the firm. No one was available at Buckmaster's for comment.

Espley petition

Petitions have been laid in the Companies division of the High Court to wind up Espley Trust, the property company formerly led by Mr Ross Shuck, and a subsidiary company Espley-Tyas Properties.

Prime rate cut

Banca Nazionale Del Lavoro, Italy's largest bank has cut its prime rate by a point to 17 per cent, bringing its lending rates into line with other major Italian banks.

Reagan to press for federal deficit cuts

From Bailey Morris Washington

President Reagan has indicated that he intends to put pressure on Congress to reduce record federal budget deficits while he himself remains aloof over the tough decision.

During a televised news conference, Mr Reagan said for the first time that he would consider cuts in social security benefits but only if faced with "overwhelming bi-partisan support" in Congress.

Mr Reagan was careful not to appear to support reductions in popular social security retirement benefits which he vowed to protect during his reelection campaign in response to charges that he had a "secret plan" to cut them. But he said if Congress insisted in the national interest he would have to consider the cuts.

Mr Reagan's strategy in dealing with record federal deficit was revealed even as Senate Republicans, who have criticized the President's proposed 1986 budget as inadequate, were in difficulty in drafting their own alternative version. Republican senators, led by Mr Robert Dole, the majority leader, plan to unveil their own budget four days before the President's plan is submitted to Congress on February 6.

The President said in his news conference that he would hold the spending in 1986 at 1985 levels even though the reductions would not be even-handed in the sense that all agencies and departments were frozen at the same level.

Dr Alan Greenspan, a member of President Reagan's economic policy advisory board, said in London yesterday that he did not expect any major new White House initiatives on the federal budget deficit. Instead, he argued, action would only be taken if the Administration was forced into it by an over-strong dollar and a reemergence of the international banking crisis.

Dr Greenspan, speaking at a seminar organised by Shearson Lehman-American Express, accepted that the 1986 budget proposals were likely to be regarded by Congress as unrealistic or "dead on arrival".



Dr Greenspan: no major new initiatives



Virginia Wade and Mark Cox: members of loss-making syndicate

Lloyd's names face further £40,000 loss

By Alison Eadie

Lloyd's names on marine syndicate 895/898/899, which includes the tennis players Virginia Wade and Mark Cox, face a further cash call of at least £40,000 in May, because of the deterioration of business since December 1983.

Names with an average premium income allocation of £20,000 on all three open years have already paid out £45,966 but face an estimated total loss of £91,830 as calculated at the end of June last year. The total loss suffered by the 250 names on the syndicate, run by the underwriting agents Spicer & White, stood at £20.5 million at the end of June, an increase of £3.76 million on the previous December.

The deterioration was caused principally in the 1982 year of account and mainly because of the need to pay additional reserves for various binding authorities to agents in North America. Further currency losses, due to the dollar's appreciation against the pound, were also significant.

The problems on the syndicate arose from a combination of overwriting insurance business to a level 2½ times above Lloyd's limits and accepting poor quality business.

Spicer & White is trying to help names with cash flow problems by arranging an interim loan facility. It is hoped that guarantees by Willis Faber, three holding company of Spicer & White since April 1982, will ensure good terms. The facility will give names a breather and may mean they do not have to pay out anything in May for additional working capital.

However, in accordance with Lloyd's policy of unlimited liability, all names will have to meet their losses in full in the end.

The new management at Spicer & White is hoping names will not take legal action against the agency, as it believes lawsuits would prejudice closing of the account and put at risk efforts to recover £5 million from reinsurance companies. These recoveries are proceeding with some success and the agency is optimistic that £1.6 million still owed by Instituto de Resseguros do Brasil will be recovered.

Some names will have difficulty meeting their obligations. About 20 on the syndicate failed their solvency tests at Lloyd's last August, meaning they cannot continue to underwrite.

Developers rush for £40m site

Five developers are bidding for a £40 million, 250,000 sq ft retail scheme in Tumbidge Wells, Kent. The site, which is being built by the council backs onto the town's prime shopping area.

The developers, Bryant Properties, MEPC with House of Fraser, the Norwich Union Insurance Group, Speyhawk Land and Estates with General Accident and Taylor Woodrow Property Company have until May to come up with ideas for the site and the financial backing.

There were applications from 39 companies to develop the site, highlighting the strength of the retail property market. Tumbidge Wells Council advised by Hillier Parker, will sell the successful bidder a 125-year lease on the site and will take a stake in the completed development.

OECD urges Britain to boost jobs within present strategy

By Sarah Hogg Economics Editor

The Government should look for ways to promote employment "within the bounds of tolerance" of its strategy, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

In its annual review of the British economy, the Paris-based inter-government club of industrial economies affirms that Britain's economic recovery is "set to continue", despite some "slight weakening in underlying conditions", which the OECD believes is not wholly due to the miners' strike. But it says there seems no early likelihood of a significant reduction in unemployment.

The OECD's forecast is slightly less optimistic than the British Treasury's, but still predicts output growth of 3 per cent in 1985 (assuming an early end to the miners' strike), slowing to 2½ per cent in the first half of 1986. The OECD's forecasts for exports and consumer spending are both lower than the Treasury's, though it is significantly more optimistic about investment than the forecast published by the Treasury last November.

Member governments retain the right to see the texts of OECD national reviews before they are published, which tends to damp down criticism of economic policies. The OECD does venture to suggest that the government might consider using some of its spare budgetary cash for investment in Britain's infrastructure, since it has "a fairly high employment content". However, the OECD adds that tax cuts would be "especially welcome at this stage", since "the most effective way to cut unemployment on a sustainable

basis is to increase the demand for labour by slowing down the growth of labour costs".

The OECD re-emphasises concerns about wage growth in Britain, giving a warning that slower growth in labour costs or faster growth in productivity may be necessary if a sustained non-inflationary recovery is to be achieved. According to this review, a "sizeable proportion" of Britain's rise in unemployment "must be regarded as a by-product of the interaction between the disinflationary process and the inflexibility of prices and wages".

Reviewing the "British experiment" (the Chancellor's own title for his economic strategy), the OECD notes that it has been "relatively successful" in bringing down inflation, while "recovery has taken place". However, the OECD points to several "disappointing features". The recovery has never been sufficiently strong to turn round the rise in unemployment, profitability remains low "despite its recent recovery", wages have continued to rise

rapidly and real interest rates have remained high. Comparing the present recovery with the previous two, the OECD points out, encouragingly, that investment has risen much more strongly this time, and has been the fastest growing component of demand since 1981. However, the review notes that employment has grown more slowly than for better conditions, especially import penetration has increased substantially.

OECD states approvingly that "after some earlier misadventures" monetary growth "has been brought under control and public sector borrowing has been contained." It endorses the Government's preoccupation with the supply side of the economy, which it considers of central importance. But the review ventures some quite robust criticism of the Government's efforts to liberalize markets and remove rigidities, arguing that plenty still remains to be done.

According to the OECD, there "may have been scope for better coordination, especially between government departments, in planning these microeconomic measures." Reviewing the Government's privatization, it says that the preservation of British Airways' route monopolies "does not augur well." The Government has, it suggests, "been inhibited from breaking up public sector monopolies before sale because of the effect on the sale price".

The OECD suggests that, if its relatively optimistic forecast is borne out, the present recovery in Britain will have been much longer than usual. However, it warns that the forecast was prepared on the assumption that the miners' strike was concluded "around the turn of the year".

Search for rig yard site

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

Howards Doris, the offshore oil and gas rig builder with yards at Loch Kishorn, in the Western Highlands, and at Methil, Fife, has confirmed it is close to completing a deal to acquire another yard on the east coast.

Before Christmas Mr Albert Granville, chairman of the company which is 50 per cent owned by CG Doris of France with the John Howard Group and the Fairclough Construction Group each owning 25 per cent, said the purchase of a third yard was being considered.

In a statement the company has said it is "currently involved in negotiations for the acquisition of such a yard" and that it is "in the early and delicate state of negotiations for orders."

A proposal which has already been agreed in principle by the three shareholders, is a new yard to be set up on an existing site to take advantage of the expected surge in orders for equipment needed for the expansion of gas fields in the southern sector of the North Sea.

The company has already ruled out taking over an existing shipbuilding facility - an experience of working as consultants in a shipyard on the Clyde has ruled out such a move.

Bids for work in the southern sector of the North Sea have been submitted based on the work being done at Loch Kishorn, but qualified with price reductions which would become available if a new yard is acquired in the south-east.

Among the sites possible is one already owned by the John Howard Group adjoining Clouston dockyard, an area within the North Kent Enterprise Zone.

MARKET SUMMARY

Table with columns: STOCK MARKETS, MAIN PRICE CHANGES, CURRENCIES, INTEREST RATES. Includes FT Ind Ord, FT A All Share, FT Govt Securities, etc.

Table with columns: CURRENCIES, INTEREST RATES. Includes London, New York, US, Prime Rate, etc.

WALL STREET

Table of stock market data including company names, share prices, and market indices like the Dow Jones Industrial Average.

Shares open mixed

New York (agencies) - The stock market was mixed in moderate, early trading yesterday. The Dow Jones industrial average, was down by 2.87 to 1,199.87.

COMMODITIES

Table of commodity prices for various goods such as coffee, sugar, and metals.

MONEY MARKETS AND GOLD

A promising start in trading evaporated in the face of a falling pound yesterday. Period rates had opened a touch softer in continuing response to the money supply news and announcement of a £2 billion temporary facility for the banks.

APPOINTMENTS

Renison Goldfields Consolidated: Mr Campbell McC. Anderson will become managing director from April 15 and chief executive officer from January 1985.

APPOINTMENTS

Atlanta Investment Trust: Mr V. J. Advani has become chairman and is joined on the Atlanta board by Mr Michael Yanner and Mr Ken Gardner.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

The pound slumped to record lows on foreign exchange markets yesterday, with market operators blaming the apparent lack of concern by the authorities for the run on the currency.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table of investment trusts with columns for company name, price, and performance metrics.

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

Table of financial trusts with columns for company name, price, and performance metrics.

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Table of sterling spot and forward rates for various currencies and time periods.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Table of London financial futures including three-month sterling, three-month Eurodollar, and US Treasury bills.

AUTHORIZED UNIT TRUSTS

Table of authorized unit trusts with columns for trust name, bid price, and offer price.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr Stephen Byrne, the city planning officer for Nottingham has been appointed president. Specialist Services: Mr P. Parker has become a director.

COMPANY NEWS

JONES STROUD (HDCS): Half-year to Sept 30. Intm div 2.5 (2.5p). Pretax profit 1,542 (1,560). Tax 639 (627). Profits for the half-year are, as forecast at the time of the AGM, marginally lower than those for the same period of the previous year.

RECENT ISSUES

IMH has reached agreement, subject to contract, to acquire for cash Schneider Motor Manufacturing, a private company located in Mason City, Iowa. The company manufactures and sells commercial ice-making equipment, ice and beverage dispensing systems.

'Cheap steel' claim prompts US inquiry

Washington (AFP) - The US Commerce Department has begun an investigation into whether steel products from eight countries are being sold in the United States at unreasonably low prices.

US may bar Japan

Washington (AFP) - The chairman of the US Federal Communications Commission, Mr Mark Fowler, said was considering retaliation against Japanese trade restrictions by requiring the same kind of product certification process that Japan uses to bar US products.

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STOCK MARKET REPORT

CU in demand on talk of US sale

By Derek Pain and Pam Spooner

Shares of Commercial Union, the joint-making insurance group, were in heavy demand as the stock market closed yesterday. Suggestions that the group had sold off its troublesome American operations sent the shares surging to 203p, a 12p gain on the day. Almost all the advance was in late trading.

There was also talk that a dawn raid, presumably from Allianz, the German insurance group which lost the epic takeover battle for Eagle Star to BAT Industries, will be launched today.

The sale of CU's North American interests could transform its prospects, now dominated by the cloud of its American connection.

In the first nine months of its current year, CU has lost £30.6 million with £16.1 million of the deficit coming in the third quarter. In the first nine months of last year CU achieved a £43.8 million profit.

A late flurry of selling halted the stock market's seemingly inexorable advance towards the 1,000-point mark.

Just when it looked as though the market had overcome a mid-morning lull, the FT 100, largely stemming from the poor Thera-EMI interim figures, and was going to end the day with a comfortable plus, the sellers moved in to clip the FT 30-share index 0.7 points to 982.4.

At one time it had been riding at 987.2, up 4.1.

The more broadly based FT SE share index also closed below its best, but still sporting a rise. It finished at a closing record of 1,261.0 points, up 1.8. At one time, it was 1,263.9 points.

Trading was heavy with more than 32,000 bargains.

Although blue chips were, in some cases off their best levels at the close, the market largely remained firm. The FT 30-share index is still on course to top the 1,000-point mark soon.

Many market men drew comfort from the steadiness of the market in face of such heavy trading. "It is just a period of consolidation," said one dealer.

almost two years ago, slipped back from the recent new share price peak. Small-scale profit-taking skimmed 13p from the shares to take them to 621p.

Recent strength in BTR has been linked to the group's latest acquisition plans, but there are now some worries that a rights issue or vendor placing might be on the way to help pay for further growth.

At BICC, buying support from Phillips & Drew, the stockbroker, helped to take Pentland Industries, the Hertfordshire company best known for the success of its Rebok sports shoes in the US, leap 10 per cent yesterday to a new share price peak of 335.

Grievance Grant stockbroker to the company has been buying shares. Stock jobbers are dealing only in 1,000 lots apparently, as a deal of sellers makes itself felt.

Shares of the electricals and cabling group 13p higher to 273p, with striking distance of the previous price peak. Mr Richard Ryder, analyst at P & D, believes the shares look undervalued. Given BICC's progress in restructuring and improving profit trend, he believes "the present price looks attractive on the medium term view."

Wolsey-Hughes continues its strong run, rising 6p to 318p, a new high. The group, which makes central heating equipment and garden tools, has been surrounded by bid talk and investment recommendations.

James Neill Holdings, the Sheffield tools group, jumped 15p to 155p yesterday as speculation grew that Stater, the ambitious group headed by Mr David Abell, was buying more shares ahead of a bid for full control. Stater's last declared shareholding in JNH was 11.9 per cent.

during the past weeks. The cold snap has encouraged investors to buy the stock, but Quiter Goodson, the stockbroker, believes Wolsey is feeling pressure on its margins which could wipe out any benefits from increased demand.

TI Group surge ahead to 252p as market men heard tell that Mr Gerald Ranson was coming back for most of the shares. He is already believed to hold around 3 per cent of the

engineering group, but is saying nothing. By the close, the TI price had slipped back to 250p, a 10p rise on the day.

Howard Machinery, where stock market talk is of a bid from F. H. Tomkins, eased 1p to 14p yesterday. Tomkins already has 21 per cent of Howard, and the City expects the former company to expand rapidly.

Shares in IMI dipped 2p from their recent high to 106p as enthusiasm for the Birmingham group waned. One leading broker firm has now downgraded profit forecasts slightly, despite having been a heavy buyer of IMI shares recently.

BSR, the electricals group, was marked 1p lower yesterday at 160p as recent buying of the shares came to an end. But the stock still trades in the lower half of its price range, having taken knocks in the past months from downgraded profit forecasts, worries for its Hong Kong business and the decision by Fifco not to buy the Swan Housewares subsidiary.

Wordplex Information Systems, the office equipment and software group, is moving steadily away from its low point. Yesterday, the shares gained 10p to 183p.

The British Rail Pension Fund has built up a 5.02 per cent stake in Taylor Woodrow, the construction group, it was disclosed yesterday. The shares rose 5p to 375p.

Pottery maker Wedgwood saw its shares marked 2p lower yesterday. The company has proved popular in recent weeks on the back of market hopes for a bid; the sell-off of the Royal Worcester ceramics businesses by Crystalate last summer went rather better than market men had previously imagined, firing thoughts of takeover demand for the other great name in British fine chinaware.

Riley Leisure is also having a boost from bid hopes. The shares of this maker of snooker tables rose 10p to 57p. There is often a run for the stock to coincide with televised snooker competitions.

Ladbrokes Group rose another 8p to 280p after this week's announcement of the letting of a prime London office site to Citibank, the US Bank.

The Americans are reckoned to be paying around £20 per square foot for the 50,000 sq ft building adjoining the Savoy Hotel on The Strand.

Oil fell back on the uncertainty over Nigeria's Opec

intentions. But among second liners Falcon Resources, an exploration hopes jumped 25p to 253p.

Imperial Group jumped above the 300p mark, touching 302p, a 5p gain on the day. United Biscuits, thought to be an Imps bid target, rose 3p to 217p. At one time, the shares touched 219p.

Gifts registered some unease over the plight of sterling, recording falls of up to 1/2p. British Telecom responded to

American investors have been attracted to Etam, the woman's clothing group. Morgan Guaranty Trust, which often represents US investors, said yesterday it now held 5.4 per cent of the company. Etam shares rose 2p to 147p. The shares came to market at 95p in June.

its maiden interim figures with a best ever level of 122p, a gain of 7p on the day. But Thors EMI fell 10p to 467p.

Tate & Lyle, on talk of US interest, rose 8p to 473p. Nardis Peakcock, the cash and carry warehouse chain, was also wanted on takeover speculation, rising 6p to 147p.

David Nixon, the Leeds hosiery and underwear group was unchanged at 123p after announcing a change of brokers. Grievance Grant resigning to be replaced by Earnshaw, Haes.

Takeover speculation has gathered around United Scientific Holdings since Mr Peter Levene, chairman, moved to the Ministry of Defence. Jacobson Tonley and Co, joint stockbrokers to International Signal and Control Group, has helped fuel the talk by aggressively buying USI shares. But Jacobson Tonley has been picking up stock for investment clients. Mr Ronnie Jacobson, a partner said: "We think the shares are a recovery stock. Our holding is not significant." USI shares were unchanged at 248p.

But Dixon's chairman, Mr Harry Turpin, is puzzled. He says Grievance Grant wrote saying Dixon's was too small for it to handle any longer.

He says there has been no row with Grievance, and he has found its work satisfactory. "I thought it a bit unusual but perhaps that's the way they do things in the City. Anyway, I think we've found good brokers in Earnshaw, Haes."

Dixon has just reported a big jump in half-time profits and a hike in the dividend. Earnshaw, Haes will also be taking on the USM-quoted York Mount property and contracting group, also chaired by Mr Turpin.

One of the first jobs of the new brokers is likely to be a check on Dixon's share register. A hefty stake is held by the Liechtenstein-registered Establishment Plumbitt, which has attracted the attention of the Takeover Panel.

No one was available at Grievance Grant to comment on reasons for resigning.

Bespak continued to suffer from its profits warning. Wednesday's 53p drop was followed by a 32p decline, leaving the shares looking decidedly friendless at 248p.

Bestwood, which features a 24.6 per cent shareholding in the Foraky oil services group as its prime asset, jumped 42p to 215p. F. G. Gates, the garage group, surged 31p to 91p on the disclosure of a takeover approach.

Ryans Hotels jumped 1 1/2 p to 22 1/2 p on its sharp profit improvement and Microvitec, out of favour for so long, came back with a 12p jump to 93p.

The waiting and developments in the merger of P. Martin rose 28p to 408p but Midland Bank remained unsettled, falling 10p to 347p.

Among breweries, Matthew Brown, the Blackburn group, again attracted takeover speculation. The same fate befell Hignsons Brewery of Liverpool. Brown rose 19p to 315p and Hignsons 7p to 100p.

On the stores pitches, buying action stayed strong, with Burton Group still proving a favourite. Investors are looking forward to next week's meeting, at which they expect to hear an optimistic report from Mr Ralph Halpern, the chairman.

Yesterday, the price jumped 21p to 451p, having touched 452p at one stage.

On the City enthusiasm, the share price striding past the 600p level in fine style. The shares gained 22p to 615p.

Empire Stores rose 8p to 112p, sharing in market hopes for a growth in consumer spending among lower income groups this year. Thoughts of tax cuts are behind the optimism; if the Chancellor sticks to the pattern of cuts of recent years, personal allowances will rise and benefit lower income groups most.

TEMPUS Telecom rings up 27% rise in interim profits

After the glossy razzmatazz of its flotation last year, British Telecom returned to the more mundane realms of the real world yesterday to announce its first set of interim results as a listed company. Yet, even without the mass marketing tinsel, nobody was disappointed.

Pretax profits of £684 million were in line with expectations and, as anticipated, there was very little in the way of surprise. The £222 million reported increase in pretax profits was boosted by three special factors.

After allowing for depreciation benefits of £52 million, a reduction in pension costs of £20 million and a fall in the interest bill of £27 million, the comparable increase becomes £123 million. It is still an impressive 27 per cent improvement and the benefits of the three factors are recurring.

The price continues to defy gravity and rose another 7p to 122p yesterday. There still seems to be no shortage of buyers at this price and the flow of sellers has been stemmed. With many institutional shareholders still underweight, the price is set to move up.

This confidence in Telecom is supported by the company's undoubted ability to make a lot of money. The important trends of call rates are all moving in the right direction and Telecom will have the flexibility to price its services very attractively.

Telecom's competitors will not find it easy to take on the giant and as the company begins to build its cash resources, the opportunities will become available to spread its interests much more widely.

One prime target area for acquisitions will be the US. The monopoly implications would make acquisitions in this country very difficult and investment overseas would also offer another incentive to Telecom: the more money it invests overseas, the more difficult the group will become to nationalize. An acquisition programme in the wider electronics sector will also reduce the group's reliance on the utility element of its interests.

Telephone calls will always be an important part of the

group's business but a time can be envisaged where its proportion will be reduced substantially. Telecom could move into the realm of being a genuine growth stock.

On the negative side, the information which Telecom offered in its interim statement was very sparse and must be improved if users and investors are to appreciate the real performance of the company. Some segmental analysis is required and a detailed breakdown of call rates would also be useful. It is still early days but Telecom must remember that it is now a listed company and its reporting should reflect this.

Electronic Rentals Television analysts were pre-occupied with disappointing figures from Thorn EMI yesterday but not preoccupied enough to allow the interim results from Electronic Rentals to slide by without notice. Increased pretax profits of £7.5 million, up from £4.4 million, were at the bottom end of expectations and not sufficient to prevent a 2p dip in the share price to 49p.

The figures were flattered by the depreciation fall-out from British Relay Wireless, which boosted profits by close on £5 million. The underlying performance is therefore impressive and with the television rental market still contracting, there is sufficient cause for concern about ER's prospects.

The company's solution is to tailor the services it provides to consumer demand, a simple enough prescription. Trials which were carried out in around 30 outlets to sell brown goods have proved successful and ER will now expand its retail operations, while still offering rental. Extensive servicing facilities already available will be used in support.

ER's video cassette recorders actually increased market share while its TV share remained static. It does not have the problem of producing machines which is one of Thorn EMI's problems.

The rental marketplace remains highly competitive and ER will be thankful that it has tidied up its other operations. Having withdrawn from cable television, it will

concentrate on its core business.

There is still much work to be done on the balance sheet. Borrowings should show a reduction of around £5 million at the year-end to the £70 million mark but the gearing is still far too high. Full year pretax profits of £15 million are in sight and the shares continue to offer a high 9 per cent yield. Philips still have a 25 per cent stake in the company. There is little immediate hope of capital growth, unless the long-standing speculation about a bid is vindicated.

Valin Pollen The boom in financial public relations shows no sign of abating and Valin Pollen, as one of the few quoted beneficiaries, has seen its share price rocket from a 160p placing price a year ago to recent highs of 365p.

Pretax profits for the year ending September 30, 1984, were up to best expectations at £603,000, 119 per cent higher and exceeding the forecast of £425,000.

New business and new staff are being added at a cracking pace. The stockbrokers Buckmaster & Moore and Montagu Lebel Stanley signed on, as did the accountants Deloitte Haskins & Sells.

Other new accounts include Unigate, Argyll Group, and on the last day of the year, Whitbread. This year Valin Pollen has won the Prudential's portable pensions business and Festfields, the City solicitors. Staff in the entire group now number nearly 150 against 80 a year ago.

Given the increasing use being made of PR by an ever widening range of companies, the surge in turnover and profits looks set to continue. The acquisition of McAvoy Wreford & Associates will swell revenue this year, with forecast for income of £470,000 in the year to April 30, 1985, but a move to new offices will be costly.

Profits could reach £850,000 bringing the prospective p/e ratio down to a more sane level of 32, assuming 45 per cent tax. The historic p/e is still a heady 47, on shares down 2p at 356p, and the yield a meagre 0.8 per cent on a 2p total dividend.

Less drilling off West Africa

By David Young Energy Correspondent

Interest in drilling for oil and gas offshore West Africa is declining because of political and economic uncertainties in the area, according to a survey by the energy consultants, Gaffney Cline and Associates.

In the survey of drilling activity in the area, the consultants report that the rapid growth experienced in the early 1980s has declined since the start of 1983.

Gaffney Cline suggests that from a technical point of view the area still offers attractive prospects.

Mr Tom Cox, the company's managing director for European, Middle Eastern and African operations, said: "The factors influencing activity offshore West Africa are many and varied."

In Nigeria for instance, there is little incentive for new development when the rate of production allowed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is so much less than the possible production.

However, some countries seem keen to develop indigenous sources of energy but appear unable to put together sufficiently attractive terms to compete with those available in other parts of the world such as Europe and Asia-Pacific.

INDUSTRY TODAY Britain's exporters could do better despite sales record to US

By David Smith

The pound's slide boosts companies' order books but other countries have overtaken them

Britain's exporters, by all accounts, are enjoying a considerable boom. Exports hit a record level of £6,450 million in November with volume, even excluding North Sea oil, up 14.5 per cent on a year earlier.

Exporters are reaping the benefits of the pound's slide. The Confederation of British Industry, in its latest quarterly survey, reported that export books stood at their best level for six years.

Companies which discovered a few years ago that they could not export and make a profit at the same time are now renewing their search for overseas markets. The list of British exports to the United States does not only include Wedgwood china, Burberry and Jaguar cars, but, increasingly, bread-and-butter products like basic chemicals and motor components.

Exports to the United States topped £1 billion in November, and British exports to the North American market split between those who have taken advantage of the halving of the pound's value against the dollar over the past four years in lower prices, and those who have kept their dollar prices unchanged and accepted a larger profit margin.

ICI, Britain's biggest exporter, has cut its dollar prices, going mainly for volume rather than wider margins.

piston rings in the United States simply because it was able to price below the local manufacturers.

British orders, where a few years ago, companies would have been unable to complete on price include a £1 million order for a naval weapons systems simulator, won by Ferranti Communications; Pye Telecommunications gained a contract, worth £1 million annually, to supply pocket phones to the United States, while a company called Craven House Marketing is supplying America's keep-fit industry with 22,000 rowing machines, worth £500,000.

For many other, household-name companies, the strength of the American economy has been sufficient to provide them with an export boom, which they can enjoy without cutting prices, at far higher profit margins.

Jaguar is the most frequently quoted example. The company sold 18,044 cars in the United States last year, 14.1 per cent up on 1983. Sales in December alone hit a new record of 2,139 cars.

Jaguar has not cut its dollar prices, the volume it can supply to the US market being constrained by production capacity at its Coventry factory. Instead, it has taken more profits from exporting to the US.

Wedgwood is in a similar position, selling 40 per cent of its output in America. However, it has not achieved this by reducing prices.

According to the Wedgwood chairman, Sir Arthur Bryan: "The strong dollar is an added bonus in selling to the United States, but we must remember that other nations' china makers are benefiting too."

"The pound is still overvalued against the mark and yen. We have not cut prices in the United States."

Tipreze jam, which is also selling at record levels in the United States, attributes its success to the exchange rate and the appointment of a new importer there. It has not reduced its prices in response to the pound's fall, but held them.

Laudable though the success of British exporters is, in the United States and elsewhere, it clearly could be a lot better.

Although final figures will not be available for about three weeks, British exports to the United States look likely to have risen by about 17 per cent, in dollar terms, in 1984.

APPOINTMENTS Thorn EMI Electronics: Mr J. A. S. Bright has been made engineering director. Equitable Life Assurance Society: Mr R. H. Ranson has become a director. Woolwich Equitable Building Society: Mr Peter Robinson has been appointed to the Woolwich's board for Scotland and Northern Ireland. National Advanced Systems: Mr Mike Brereton has been

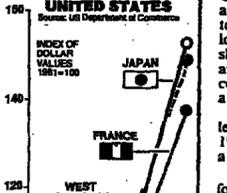


Table titled 'BRITAIN'S EXPORTS (£ million)' showing quarterly data for 1984 (Q1-Q4) and annual totals for 1980-1983. Columns include North America and Total.

This compares with about 40 per cent for Japanese exports, 35 per cent for those from Germany, and 34 per cent for French exports.

Japan, German and French exports have ridden on the back of the American economic recovery over the past three years.

British exports to the United States, in contrast, only really picked up in 1984 and actually fell back, in dollar terms, in 1983.

Why has Britain, despite a bigger currency fall against the dollar than competitor countries, fared less well in the American market?

Selincourt to close offshoot

By Cliff Feltham

Selincourt, the clothing group headed by the former BTR chief, Sir David Nicholson, is closing its loss-making Tricosa fashion offshoot in France.

Selincourt has been attempting for months to engineer a package with French banks and the authorities but after failing to reach agreement has decided to pull out of the business, likely to involve a total cost of £3.5 million.

Mr Roger Barklett, finance director, said "It looks as if the business will have to be closed." Tricosa employs about 450 in four locations.

Tricosa, which supplies up-market fashionwear, has been making losses for the past couple of years and against a background of poor trading conditions Selincourt saw little future without considerable restructuring, involving a reduction in capacity and slimming down in costs.

Mr Barklett said: "When we heard after 10 months of discussion that the banks and authorities could not accept our proposals we were faced with the choice of continuing to pump money in or turning the tap off."

Selincourt said the group excluding trading losses of Tricosa is continuing to trade profitably and to generate cash. In view of the progress being made in the remainder of the group the board's decision in respect of Tricosa was prompted by a determination to ensure that the operations and prospects of the group excluding Tricosa should not be undermined by events in France.

Selincourt has now, it says, "initiated the appropriate legal procedures" leading to its withdrawal from Tricosa.

British TELECOM INTERIM RESULTS

Table showing The unaudited results for the three months and six months ended 30 September 1984. Columns include Turnover, Operating costs, Operating profit, Net interest payable, Profit before taxation, Tax on profit on ordinary activities, Profit on ordinary activities after taxation, Preference dividend, Profit attributable to ordinary shareholders, Earnings per ordinary share.

EXTRACTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT In the three months to September 1984, turnover was £176 million or 10% higher than in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Copies of the Interim Results leaflet can be obtained by telephoning Bristol (0272) 276153 or by writing to British Telecommunications plc, PO Box 283 Bristol BS99 7TB. For daily information on the British Telecom share price, dial Shareline on one of the numbers given below.

THE TIMES Portfolio

From your Portfolio card check your eight share price movements. Add them up to give you your overall total. Check this against the daily dividend figure published on this page. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the total daily prize money stated. If you are a winner follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. You must always have your card available when claiming.

No.	Company	Year	Price	Change	Dividend	Yield %
1	Electricals	1984	10.00	0.10	0.50	5.00
2	System Designers	1984	15.00	0.20	0.75	5.00
3	Oxoniacs	1984	12.00	0.15	0.60	5.00
4	STC	1984	18.00	0.30	0.90	5.00
5	VQ Instruments	1984	20.00	0.40	1.00	5.00
6	Sound Diffusion	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
7	Keele	1984	11.00	0.18	0.55	5.00
8	BICC	1984	16.00	0.28	0.80	5.00
9	Dubilier	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
10	AB Elect	1984	17.00	0.35	0.85	5.00
11	INDUSTRIALS A-D	1984	19.00	0.38	0.95	5.00
12	Bidde	1984	15.00	0.28	0.75	5.00
13	Belong	1984	12.00	0.20	0.60	5.00
14	Colson	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
15	Barham	1984	11.00	0.18	0.55	5.00
16	Broken Hill	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
17	DPCE	1984	16.00	0.28	0.80	5.00
18	Balbeck	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
19	Bath & Portland	1984	12.00	0.20	0.60	5.00
20	Burgess	1984	15.00	0.25	0.75	5.00
21	Birmingham Mint	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
22	BANKS DISCOUNT HP	1984	17.00	0.35	0.85	5.00
23	Procter & Gamble	1984	19.00	0.38	0.95	5.00
24	Bank of Ireland	1984	16.00	0.28	0.80	5.00
25	Gannex Post	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
26	Schroders	1984	15.00	0.25	0.75	5.00
27	Clive	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
28	Allied Irish	1984	16.00	0.28	0.80	5.00
29	Stead Chart	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
30	Gerrard Nat	1984	15.00	0.25	0.75	5.00
31	Morson Sec	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
32	Smith & Nephew	1984	16.00	0.28	0.80	5.00
33	INDUSTRIALS S-Z	1984	18.00	0.35	0.90	5.00
34	Scpa	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
35	Six Hundred	1984	15.00	0.25	0.75	5.00
36	Wadon	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
37	Silemnight	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
38	Turner & Newall	1984	15.00	0.25	0.75	5.00
39	Stonhill	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
40	Spur (NW)	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00
41	Tax	1984	15.00	0.25	0.75	5.00
42	Trailgrip House	1984	13.00	0.22	0.65	5.00
43	Simon Eng	1984	14.00	0.25	0.70	5.00

Weekly Dividend

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Total
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Claimants should ring 0254-53272

BRITISH FUNDS

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

BREWERIES

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

BANKS DISCOUNT HP

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

ELECTRICALS

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

BUILDING AND ROADS

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

FINANCE AND LAND

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
105	105.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
106	106.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
107	107.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
108	108.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
109	109.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
110	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
111	111.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
112	112.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
113	113.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
114	114.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
115	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
116	116.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
117	117.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
118	118.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
119	119.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
120	120.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

FOODS

1984 BS High Low Stock	Price	Change	Int. Yield %	Gross Div %
100	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
101	101.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
102	102.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
103	103.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
104	104.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

England let South Zone escape by failing to use helpful conditions

From John Woodcock, Cricket Correspondent, Secunderabad

A declaration by South Zone left England to make 232 to win here yesterday at approximately six runs an over. The loss of four quick wickets, just before and after the start of the last 20 overs, put an end to their chase, and with a possible 10 overs still left the match was left drawn.

England's one gain from this last day was the sight of Gower playing a number of his best strokes. While he was there, with Gatting to follow, an England victory was on the cards; but just when one was thinking that the captain was back in form he holed out, only for the meat of the bat, to the only fielder guarding an 80 yards stretch of the leg boundary. His bat, though, was ringing again.

It did England no credit that on such a lively pitch they had twice allowed South Zone to get what runs they needed. Yesterday morning there was a good deal of playing and missing, it is true, and various leg-before decisions, including two or three against Azharuddin, could just as well have gone the other way. Cowans, too, did not bowl on the last two days. But the basic requirement of length was too often neglected. Agnew's 44 overs in the match cost him getting on for five runs each.

That said, the young South Zone side battled with confidence, no little skill and quite frequent enterprise, and in both innings their Nos 9 and 10, Ayub and Raman, took a lot of getting out. When they came together yesterday South Zone were only 182 runs ahead with eight second-innings wickets down. In warding off trouble and then setting up a declaration they did not look at all like tailenders. Earlier Qayyum had his wicket spreadeagled by Foster in the third over of the day. Kanwilkar had slashed a short ball to cover point and Azharuddin had been caught at the wicket, trying to force Edmonds square on the off side.

By the time Azharuddin was out, England were beginning to think that the umpires were giving them short change. Certainly it was hard to see on one occasion how Azharuddin, playing back to Edmonds' "arm" ball, was not leg-before. French had to be admonished by Gower for throwing a glove on the ground in disgust. So I hope was Edmonds, whose gesturing to Azharuddin, when eventually he was out, showed the English cricketer at his self-righteous worst. Azharuddin now has scores of 52 not out, 152, 110 and 52 to his credit against Gower's side. He is a really fine prospect, who is to be seen buzzing round his home town of Hyderabad on a scooter presented to him by well-wishers.

Going in again at 1.15, on a bright and breezy day, England experienced a hairy start. Moxon followed his 153 of the first innings with a duck, being caught low down at the wicket. It did England no credit that on such a lively pitch they had twice allowed South Zone to get what runs they needed.



Gower: flowing again

Scoreboard

Table with cricket scores for South Zone vs England. Columns include batsmen, runs, and bowling figures. Includes sections for First Innings, Second Innings, and Extras.

Omar's century secures an opening victory

Christchurch (Reuter) - An unbeaten century by opener Qasim Omar after a misjudged declaration helped Pakistan to an eight wicket victory over Canterbury in the first match of their New Zealand tour yesterday.

Canterbury had led by 20 runs on the first innings, but after incurring a slow over-rate in their second, their captain, Fulton, declared just before tea, setting Pakistan to make 230 runs in 110 minutes and 20 mandatory overs.

Omar dominated Canterbury's attack, which was depleted by the absence of Hadlee, reaching his century in 170 minutes, from 119 balls, in an innings which included 13 fours.

Mohsin Khan shared in a 131-run opening partnership before being caught for 71 shortly before the start of the final 20 overs. Promoted to open the batting, Fulton and Mohsin were out driving Thiele to MacDonald deep on the side.

Javed Miandad, Pakistan's captain, who scored 112 in his side's first innings, joined Omar but could not repeat his early form and was caught by Fulton at mid-off. The disastrous game for the Pakistanis during Canterbury's first innings Pakistan bowled 13.46 overs per hour, a rate which fell to 12.71 overs during the second innings.

"Perhaps I could accept a below-par over rate in the Canterbury's first innings when the Pakistanis were fired from flying and just starting out on the tour - but not two days later," Dowling said.

Pakistan told to speed up

Christchurch (Reuter) - Pakistan were asked to improve their over rate after the first match of their New Zealand tour against Canterbury yesterday, by Graham Dowling, executive director of the New Zealand Cricket Council.

"Perhaps I could accept a below-par over rate in the Canterbury's first innings when the Pakistanis were fired from flying and just starting out on the tour - but not two days later," Dowling said.

Jesty has five choices

Surrey and Somerset have made offers to Trevor Jesty, the 36-year-old former England player who left Hampshire last month after a row over the county captaincy. Jesty will also have talks with Gloucestershire, Sussex and Nottinghamshire before making a decision on where he will play next season.

He is also considering an offer to leave the county and work in property development on a full-time basis. "I will decide next month what to do, but I feel I still have four or five years to offer a county and I don't want to go out just yet," he said.

Leicestershire's 23-year-old batsman, Tim Boon, has left hospital in Durban, South Africa, and hopes to be fit for the start of the new season. Boon broke his thigh in two places in a car crash before Christmas. The former Leicestershire batsman, Brian Davison, looks likely to join Gloucestershire next season as he gets clearance from the Test and County Cricket Board.

Gloucestershire are hoping to sign the medium pace bowler Les McFarlane, who was released by Lancashire after last summer, when he enjoyed his best season for them with 31 wickets at an average cost of 23.32 runs.

Brennan dies

Don Brennan, the former Yorkshire and England wicketkeeper, has died at Bradford, aged 64, after a long illness.

Brennan, an amateur, who owned a Bradford textile business, played for Yorkshire from 1947-53. He played twice against South Africa in 1951, and toured India the following year.

In first class cricket he caught 316 batsmen and stumped 118.



Shastri: his haul against Baroda included 13 sixes

Shastri opens up to equal Sobers's feat

Ravi Shastri, the Indian Test match all-rounder, yesterday equalled Sir Garfield Sobers's previously unique achievement of hitting six sixes in one over in a first-class match.

Shastri was playing for Bombay in Ranji Trophy match against Baroda and the bowler to suffer the assault was a little-known left-arm spinner, Thakkar.

Less than a week ago Shastri, aged 22, was pelted with fruit by spectators in Calcutta after taking 254 balls to score 111 in the third Test match against England. Yesterday he reached three figures in 71 minutes off 80 balls and he added another hundred in 41 minutes off a further 43 balls. He hit 13 sixes in all, a feat achieved only three times before in first-class cricket (once by Mervyn King and once by Gordon Greenidge) and beaten only by John Reid, the New Zealander, who smote 15 sixes in an innings of 296 for Wellington against Northern Districts in 1962-63.

Shastri was able to complete his double century and match Sobers's record when Sunil Gavaskar, the India and Bombay captain, did not make the expected declaration soon after tea when Shastri had passed 100 and Bombay's lead was around 300. Gavaskar eventually declared with Bombay 457 for five, leaving

Sri Lanka, who were captain, Mendis, scored 56, reached 197 for eight from their quota of 50 overs after being put in. West Indies scored 198 for two with 9.2 overs to spare.

The Sri Lankans, beaten by Australia in Sydney on Tuesday, were pinned down in what was the inaugural international here by tight bowling from Garner and Holding. Garner dismissed openers Wettimuny and Silva and Holding took the wicket of Kuruppu to reduce Sri Lanka to 39 for three.

Mendis and Dias led a revival with a fourth wicket partnership of 76 after an uneasy start. Mendis was severe on the off spin of Richards. Sri Lanka then lost four wickets for 30 runs to reach 143 for seven.

West Indies' progress was checked by a shower and Karnain and Ratnayake, who made an unfinished eighth wicket stand of 52. Sri Lanka's attack was missing fast bowler, de Mel because of an ankle injury, and their problems were compounded by dropped catches.

Best of the six: Tony Doyle (right), of Britain, celebrates with his Australian partner, Gary Wiggins (left), after they had won the Bremen Six Day race, which finished yesterday. The pair secured victory, their first in a major indoor "six", in the final moments of the event, winning by only nine points from Danny Clark and Didi Thurau, the only other combination on the same lap at the end. It was Doyle's third win on the winter indoor circuit, making the former world and British pursuit champion the most successful Briton ever in this demanding series. He and Wiggins are the current European Madison champions

Gerulaitis plays into Nystrom's hands

New York (APF) - Neither the frigid weather outside Madison Square Garden, where temperatures fell below zero, nor the aggressive tactics of Vitas Gerulaitis inside the stadium bothered Joakim Nystrom in the \$400,000 Grand Prix Masters tournament.

The 21-year-old Swede who comes from the city of Sleslethen, which is 400 miles north of Stockholm and only 75 miles south of the arctic circle, notched up a comfortable 6-3, 6-4 victory in his first-round match. "This is like summer for me", Nystrom said. The winner of four tournaments last year which enabled him to climb to eleventh in the world rankings, Nystrom added: "At home last week the temperature was -25° Fahrenheit."

Nystrom is the lone Swede out of the four playing in the Masters this week who was not a member of the victorious Davis Cup team last month. He watched the match on television at his home. Nystrom, however, expressed no disappointment in being passed over because the tie was played on a clay court and Mats Wilander and Henrik Sundstrom had better results on clay. The Swede mixed his baseline ground with some excellent serves against Gerulaitis, who was the 1980 and 1982 runner-up.

The New Yorker tried to keep the pressure on by attacking from the forehand but he had the chance. The trouble was that he became easy prey for Nystrom's accurate passing shots.

Ironically, Gerulaitis held leads in both sets. Nystrom will play Ivan Lendl in the quarter-finals. The Czech has been a Masters finalist for the past four years. Eliot Teltscher of the United States, who scored his sixth consecutive victory over the Czech Davis Cup player, Tomas Smid, when he cruised to a 6-3, 6-4 win, will now face fellow-American Jimmy Connors for a place in the semi-finals.

Lloyd out of luck

Auckland (Reuter) - John Lloyd, the second seed, was knocked out of the Auckland grand prix tournament yesterday by the unseeded American, Glenn Layendecker.

Lloyd said after the 6-4 second round defeat by the 23-year-old Yale University economics graduate: "I played horrendously and got my just deserts. If I had won the tie-break it might have been a different story."

McEnroe, the defending champion, will face Anders Jarryd of Sweden, and Jarryd's compatriot Mats Wilander will play the South African-born American Johan Kriek.

YACHTING

Sailing into Olympic wind change

Stung by the relatively poor performance of Britain's yachting team in last year's Olympic Games, the Royal Yachting Association have taken the initiative to improve the medal tally in 1988.

He will be one of three Cambridge Blues strengthening the Midland side. Richard Moon, the scrum half, and Andy Martin, the wing who played at full back for Cardiff over the Christmas holidays, are also joining. Andrew had been working briefly in London and intends returning to the capital in September, if his University commitments are completed.

His decision to go for Nottingham has been partly on his partnership with Moon. "We have played together successfully for Cambridge and also for the England Under-23. Richard will be travelling up with me and that will help Nottingham impress on the best sides Cambridge played last term."

Selectors making their job harder

By Gerald Davies

Who would be a Welsh selector in these anxious times when there are so many opinions over choosing the national team as there are permutations of the 34 players in the squad?

If the answer is to be their, however, let it be done without too much rattling of feathers. They may argue, but, because of their style, the selectors seem to attract awkward questions which is bound to unsettle the tranquility they seek to get on with the job. That they are not flustered with success is apparent from the way the announcement of the Welsh team to play France tomorrow has been delayed to suit some time over the weekend, no one quite knows when.

More to the point was the peevish criticism of Terry Holmes from the additions which were made to the squad last weekend. If the selectors believe they could do without a lot of publicity and pressure, this did not seem to be the right way of going about it. It caused a sad state of affairs.

In the collective mind of the selection committee it may have appeared an eminently sensible thing to do, although I cannot think how. In the absence of an immediate explanation, one suggestion was that the selectors were showing sympathy for a man who has just returned from a skiing holiday in Italy and may not have wanted to rush back into midwinter evening squad training. Alternatively there is the possibility that they thought they may have tried to pull rank on Holmes for going on holiday at such an important time in the rugby year.

Thinking of the collective face of the selectors, in the light of this farce, put me in mind of Agneta Agneta whose demagogue Woodcock observed one day "was rather like that of one who, picking up dust on the railway line, has just caught the down express in the back."

The reason, finally given, was that since there were three scrum halves already in the squad there was no point in including a fourth. It seemed odd to exclude the most likely to be in the team. It was further suggested that they wanted another confirmation of Holmes's fitness. Yet Paul Thornburn, the young Neath full back, was promoted to the squad at the same time when he was still on the injury list and was not likely to play for another fortnight. On Saturday they reconsidered the position and recruited Holmes to the squad.

The policy of squad training and the philosophy currently prevailing needs to be questioned in the way our Rugby Correspondent did earlier in the week. If the patient is said to be ailing, the recommendation appears to be that there is nothing so seriously wrong that a spell of squad training cannot put right. If they may have tried to pull rank on Holmes for going on holiday at such an important time in the rugby year.

Andrew to play for Nottingham

Rob Andrew (above) the Cambridge University and new England stand-off, is to join Nottingham for the remainder of the season (Peter Bills writes). Andrew, who won his first full cap against Romania last weekend, had pondered spending the rest of the season with the University of joining a club.

He will be one of three Cambridge Blues strengthening the Midland side. Richard Moon, the scrum half, and Andy Martin, the wing who played at full back for Cardiff over the Christmas holidays, are also joining. Andrew had been working briefly in London and intends returning to the capital in September, if his University commitments are completed.

His decision to go for Nottingham has been partly on his partnership with Moon. "We have played together successfully for Cambridge and also for the England Under-23. Richard will be travelling up with me and that will help Nottingham impress on the best sides Cambridge played last term."

RUGBY UNION

Scots end their poor run

Schools rugby by Michael Stevenson

The outstanding result in schools rugby recently was Scottish Schools 7-3 victory over Wales after Scotland had suffered the indignity of desecrative defeats at the hands of the New Zealand and French.

It was the first time that Scotland had beaten Wales at schools level since 1977. An opportunity in broken play by Jarrod and a penalty from Swanson, accounted for Scotland's victory. Wales scored through a penalty by Evans but the Scots' pack was just too good and their lively back row of Malone, Robertson and Pearson were outstanding. Dollar Academy counted three players in the Scottish side. Wright, Robertson and Pearson, and Edinburgh Academy, Scotland's outstanding school side this winter, two Swanson and Walker.

Despite a disappointing general standard of play in the Roses match at Keighley last weekend, partly owing to the conditions, Lancashire and Yorkshire contribute nine of the North's team (and five of the six players in the squad) to the New Zealand touring side at Otley on Sunday (2.0).

As is generally the case in schools rugby, in the North no one side is outstanding and it is significant that no school contributes more than two players to the squad. It will be considerably and pleasantly surprising if the North are not comfortably beaten by New Zealand, whose morale has been boosted by recent victories against Ulster, Irish Schools and the Scottish Schools. The latter's win against the Midlands on their return to England.

Another side, Victoria State Schools, opened their tour last weekend with a 26-0 win against Severn. The match was played in excellent conditions, and with two inches of snow on the ground, Victoria adapted successfully and were particularly well served by their stand-off half, Brooker, and scrum half, McEwen.

Scots play safe

The Scottish Rugby Union will hold a "mini-trial" at Murrayfield tomorrow should the severe frost prevent a trial of the club fixtures this weekend. A trial would enable the selection committee to sort out any doubts before deciding their team to play Ireland on February 2.

It would also give players such as John Rutherford, Alan Paterson and David Leslie, all recently returned from injury, much-needed match practice. The trial would be open to the public.

HOCKEY

Welsh caught in middle of power struggle

Since 1973 Scotland have been England's main rivals in the home countries indoor championships, which is to be held in Cardiff today, and tomorrow, Scotland have a better record but in more recent times the balance of power has shifted towards England, who won the title in Edinburgh in January, 1984 and went on to take the silver medal in the European championship at the same venue a month later.

The challenge from Ireland is strong, however, and the event, as likely as not, will revive the intense three-way struggle, each side striving to score as many goals as possible against Wales, the weakest side in the quartet.

England are well prepared, having finished second to Slough in the Roses tournament at Bristol and second to West Glamorgan at B&N Neuenshar. The inclusion of Leman and Jennings adds skill and power to an attack already well stocked with top-class scorers such as Alan Clarke, Nicholson and Nick Clark.

Scotland have chosen four players, Billy McPherson, Cathall, Christie and Cox from Manchester, the winners of the Glenfiddich tournament last week at Glasgow, as well as Douglas Potter, Tom Hay and Kaapp from Murray International Metals.

Ireland have picked seven players from Team Volkswagen, the runners-up to Manchester at B&N Neuenshar. Crawford, McKee, Glasgow, Burns, Martin, Kenny Morris and Kirkwood. McConnell has been left out at his own request.

Today's matches: Ireland v Scotland (7.15); Wales v England (8.05). Tomorrow: Wales v England (10.0); Ireland v Scotland (10.50); England v Ireland (11.0); Wales v Scotland (11.50).

SQUASH RACKETS

Williams ready to add to his collection

By Colin McQuillan

Geoff Williams, the national squash champion who has risen from obscurity in recent months, has another chance to enhance his reputation tonight.

At South Marston Country Club, Swindon, Williams begins his attempt to add the British Doubles title to his growing collection and finds himself operating under the sponsorship of Powertrain.

CYCLING

'Blood doping' admitted by US official

New York (Reuter) - Members of the successful 1984 United States Olympic cycling team, including gold, silver and bronze medalists, took "blood doping" transfusions before competing at the 1984 Los Angeles Games, according to Rolling Stone magazine.

A report to be published in the magazine in its January 29 issue, transfusions, which were carried out in a hotel room near the Los Angeles velodrome, gave the athletes greater endurance by raising the concentration of red blood cells.

He said: "The doping was never banned by the International Olympic Committee. There is an investigation by the Federation into this and there will be a report issued on January 18."

Boxing

Hungry fighter fighting hunger

Atlantic City (Reuter) - Terrence Ali, of Guyana, plans to donate part of his \$60,000-dollar purse from his first boxing world title bout against the American holder, Harry Arroyo, to starving children in Africa.

Ali, who takes on Arroyo for the International Boxing Federation (IBF) lightweight title here on Saturday, said: "I'm fighting for the hungry children in Africa. I want to skip a lot of meals as a kid. I want to be hungry, too. I don't ever want to be that hungry again."

More boxing, page 21

DEATHS
LLOYD - On January 10, 1985, at the age of 87, after a long illness, the late Mrs. Maud Lloyd...

BIRTHS
BARBON - On 7th January 1985, at St. Mary's Hospital, a son, James William, to Mrs. Mary and Mr. John Barbon...

DEATHS
MARTINI - On January 10, 1985, at the age of 87, after a long illness, the late Mrs. Maud Martini...

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Superb 6th floor flat in modern block with magnificent views. Reception, kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bath, terrace, carport, 24 hrs. concierge, 24 hrs. porterage & 24 hrs. security.

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COLLECTOR who purchases interesting and unusual books, manuscripts, etc. Tel: 01-229 9618. Box No 18347.

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FOR SALE
A BRAND NEW set of 4 Great Britain of the Western World (including the Republic of Ireland) 1:50,000 scale. Tel: 01-426 4774.

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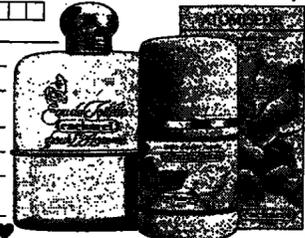
FOR SALE
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February 14th. Cacharel will send your love a gift if you send your love in The Times.

Place a personal message in The Times on February 14th, and your Valentine will get more than just the message - a gift of Cacharel fragrance as well. (We don't reveal your name!)

My Valentine message is:
I enclose a cheque for £... charge my Access/Visa card
My name and address
Recipients name and address
HIS HERS please tick which
Office use only: TT



ENTERTAINMENTS

THEATRES
Continued from page 26
CHEER CHESTER SQUARE 830
SHERWOOD 830
A VERY FUNNY SHOW
THE BIRTHDAY OF ADRIAN MOLE
NEW PRODUCTIONS
CINEMAS
ACADEMY 457 280
ACADEMY 457 280
ACADEMY 457 280
ACADEMY 457 280
ACADEMY 457 280
ART GALLERIES
ANTHONY CORRIE & SON
THE ART SOCIETY
EXHIBITIONS
THE ART SOCIETY

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Eerie silence broken by sound of tapping



Safe at last: Miss Eva Krejci's six-hour ordeal is over.

By Paul Valley

An eerie silence descended over the mound of rubble, all that was left of the six flats which four hours earlier had been Newham Court.

Firemen, who had minutes before been working with purposeful speed, stood motionless. From somewhere, beneath tons of brickwork and cement, a sound had been heard. It was tapping.

It took another two hours before they reached the trapped woman, Miss Eva Krejci, who had been standing by the bath in her first floor flat when the gas explosion took place. Now she was lying beside it, curled in a foetal position, her legs caught by a gigantic concrete pillar, but with the bath

propping up a large section of wall, like an arch over her head. The tunnel they made to her was six feet long and 18 inches high. Yet Mr Barry Powell, a senior registrar at Reckhampton Hospital who is 17 stone and 6ft 4ins tall, crawled through it on his stomach to reach her.

Three times he made the perilous journey which could have brought tons of debris down on himself. "I am very frightened. Please get me out," she said to him, clearly terrified.

He did. But first he took a blanket to her and a drip containing plasma substitute so that she would not dehydrate; he could not reach her arm to

fix it and spent 15 minutes attaching it to her hand. He returned twice to examine her condition before deciding that the only option was to pull her by the feet through the tunnel.

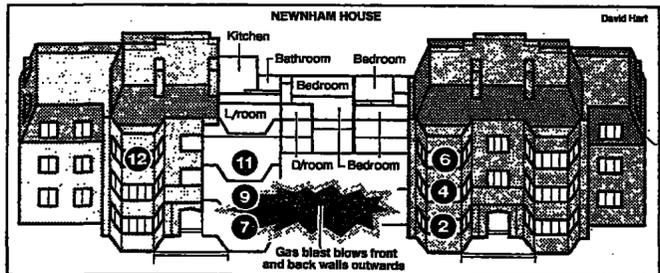
"She was a very brave lady," said Mr Powell. "She was conscious and completely coherent, but though she was very frightened she did not panic at any time. She did not ask for painkillers, even when the firemen pulled her out."

As to the danger to himself, Mr Powell shrugged: "All the firemen were exposed to the same risk."

It took more than ten minutes to complete the delicate operation.



Listening for life: A fireman presses his ear to the rubble.



The disaster flats and their listed tenants: flat No 2 Mr Metropolitan, 4 Mrs Elsie Kellerman, 6 Mrs Sandra Weeks, 7 Mr Norman Wilkes, Mrs Janet Wilkes, 9 Miss Eva Krejci, Miss Karen Krejci, 11 Mr Maurice Emberson, Mrs Phyllis Emberson; at No 12 were Mr and Mrs Michael Ashcroft who alerted the gas board.

Then rescuers formed a human corridor to pass her down to a blanket covered trolley. Her strained face and bare hair-stained feet could just be seen. Her frilly nightgown was in tatters. She told firemen: "Thank you very much for getting me out of here."

Later, at the hospital, Dr John Thurston, head of the accident and emergency centre, said: "She was in remarkably good condition considering the frozen weather." Miss Krejci has a broken right leg and a broken back, which may result in paralysis from the waist downwards.

Last night, it was feared that her sister Karen is among those who died. The women, both in

their thirties, were in different rooms in their flat when the gas ignited.

It was to have been a day off for them from their work as gaming inspectors in the fashionable casino at the Clermont Club, Berkeley Square, where they both began work as croupiers.

Throughout the rescue Eva constantly asked for her sister but the firemen and surgeons could not give the answer she wanted to hear. Karen had not been found.

Eva's right leg is completely smashed. Her back may well be beyond repair. "At this stage," Dr Thurston said, "I think she just feels lucky to be alive."

Britain rejected US sites for A-tests, says chief scientist

By Pat Healy

The 1951 Churchill government rejected conditional offers by the United States of two nuclear test sites in the Pacific, against the wishes of a leading scientist in charge of the test programme, the Australian Royal Commission investigating the safety of the tests was told in London yesterday.

Lord Penney, who as Sir William Penney was the first director of the British Atomic Weapons Research Establishment, told the commission that by 1946 the US was paying much more attention to nuclear weapons and did not want the British to join in Britain's decision in 1947 to make atomic bombs inevitably meant there would have to be nuclear tests, and he had taken the view that existing American facilities should be used, either in the Nevada desert or in the Pacific.

The Americans, who had already stopped the free flow of scientific information on nuclear weapons with the McMahon Act which took effect in 1946, made a "highly restrictive" offer of sites, Lord Penney said. Their terms were that they wanted to know what was in the bombs being tested and wanted to carry out the tests themselves.

"I would have taken it because I wanted to get back to Anglo-American collaboration", Lord Penney told the commission. "But the British Government said no."

The tests then being prepared would have involved radioactive fallout over an area of perhaps 10 yards in one direction and up to 30 yards in another.

Asked why a site could not have been found in the United Kingdom if the fall-out area was so small, Lord Penney said it would have been difficult to have a site where the fall-out released did not get into the water supply.

Under questioning yesterday, Lord Penney accorded that previously secret documents released to the commission by the Government showed that instruments used to measure the radiation dose received by personnel involved in the tests were ineffective, and that he had issued no instructions on safety precautions.

Lord Penney said he did not know what steps had been taken to inform personnel of the risks they might be facing. He assumed the Australians had informed their own personnel, and believed the Admiralty had informed British personnel. Asked what advice had been taken on itinerants in the range area, Lord Penney said that after flights over the area it had been concluded that there were no Aborigines present. The hearings continue today.

Commons completes the Tebbit convalescence

Continued from page 1

standing in for Mr Kinnock, and Mr Tebbit joined in the cheers. A moment later he allowed himself to say "rab-bish", not too loudly.

Then a Thatcher lecture on employment theory got under the Hattersley skin, the Hattersley face reddened, the Tebbit frame relaxed and leaned back, and a smile of the purest joy spread across the Tebbit features.

The Commons in hot debate, and the parliamentarian's best therapy was doing its work on the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

He stayed a while to hear Mr Tom King report on the fatal explosion at Putney and the rescues from the rubble so startling like his own. There was a tribute to the skill and bravery of the rescue services. By now he had moved to sit on the gangway steps beside

Mr John Wakeham, and the Labour MP Dennis Skinner, a few feet away, reminded Mr King that ministers had twice within six months paid tribute to the rescue services. Would the Government remember not to denigrate them if they had to go on strike for more pay?

Tom King, offended, declined to answer. Norman Tebbit, a no-holds-barred politician who recognises another in Dennis Skinner, simply grinned. One part of his world at least was as it should be.

Mr Tebbit also did his first work at his department's headquarters in Victoria Street, although he had an office set up in hospital within a few days of the bomb.

Those who work with him say that his strength grows visibly each day, and that his competitive political spirit is if anything greater than before.

Birthday call

Washington (AP) - Former President Richard Nixon got a telephone call from President Reagan wishing him a happy 72nd birthday. Mr Nixon, who is suffering from a painful attack of shingles, spent the day at his New Jersey home.

Babies unwell

Rome (AP) - Two of the one-day old sextuplets born here to a woman on fertility drugs were transferred to intensive care wards after they developed breathing difficulties. The four other boys were reported in satisfactory condition.

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

New exhibitions: Chagall; Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London, WI: Mon to Sun, 10 to 6; (ends March 31).
Ceramics: One of a Kind; motoprints, 1984; Scottish painting by young Scottish artists; Crawford Centre for the Arts, St. Andrews, Mon to Sat 10 to 5, Sun 2 to 5; (ends Feb 10).
Last chance to see: Christmas paintings by Falmouth Children; Arts Gallery, Municipal

Offices, Falmouth: 10 to 1 and 2 to 4.30.
Oil paintings by Richard Wallace; Ginnel Gallery, Lloyds House, 16 Lloyd St, Manchester, 9 to 5.30.
Music: Concert by the Roger Pollen Trio, Hamilton House, Bangor, Co Down, 8.
Concert by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; Town Hall, Birmingham, 2.15.
Recital by Elizabeth Anderson (cello) and Nigel Clayton (piano); The King's School, Ottery St Mary, Devon, 7.30.

Concert by the Landini Consort; Westminster Arts Centre, High St, Westminster, 7.30.
Concert by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra; Guildhall, Southampton, 7.30.
Norwich Antiques Fair; Blackfriars Hall, St Andrew's Plain, Norwich, 11 to 9; (ends tomorrow, 10.30 to 5).
Poetry from Scotland by Norman McCraig; Harbour Arts Centre, Irvine, Strathclyde, 7.45.
International Book Show, Ears Court, London, 10 to 8, Sat and Sun 10 to 7; (ends Jan 13).

Food prices

Chicken is easily this week's outstanding buy. Frozen birds are down to 39p a lb in Bejam, the cheapest for two years, and the British Chicken Information Service reports that there are many other bargains to be found in supermarkets and butchers. Marks and Spencer have reduced the price of fresh Tesco have braising steaks at £1.68 a lb and Fine Fare boneless pot roast at £1.76 is good value. Stewing steak in Presto is £1.42 a lb. New Zealand lamb is another good buy. Salsbury have a leg at £1.34 a lb and whole shoulder at 64p. Sainsbury family packs of loin chops at £1.08 a lb and best end of neck 99p; Bejam have reduced chipm chop by 39p to 99p a lb.

Fish supplies are expected to improve as the fleets return to sea after the Christmas and New Year break. Average prices in London and the south-east for cod filets are £1.54 a lb, haddock £1.54 (stoked £1.53), whiting £1.08, plaice £1.72. La Plage 76p, herring 68p, mackerel 62p and kipper with bone 95p.

The freezing weather has affected the supply and prices of home grown vegetables, including cabbage, carrots, greens, leeks, parsnips and turnips.

Roads

The Midlands: M6: Roadworks on both carriageways near Corley service station; delays. M5: Roadworks between junction 4 Bromsgrove and junction 5 Droitwich; outside lanes closed both carriageways, off peak; motorway closed between 9pm and 6am; diversion. M6: Roadworks between junctions 10 and 11 near Wolverhampton; contraflow; delays.

Wales and West: A30: Temporary traffic lights from Oakhampton to various locations. City of London: A1: One lane open westbound between junctions 17 and 18 (Cirencester to Bath stretch). A470: Temporary lights (24 hrs) between South Wells and Lyswen, at Epwode; single file traffic.

The North: A1: Roadworks at Linkhall, North Charlton, N of Alnwick, Northumberland. A1: Roadworks at Beal, S of Berwick-upon-Tweed. M621: Major resurfacing work between Gildersome and Beeston, near Leeds, on north and southbound carriageways.

Scotland: A972: Single lane traffic with lights at Kingsway near A85 junction at Invergowrie. City of Aberdeen: A92: Repair works on Great Southern Rd at King George VI Bridge; lane and carriageway closures. A92: Bypass construction two miles S of Stonehaven; single lane traffic with lights.

Information supplied by the AA.

Weather forecast

Anticyclones over northern Scotland will persist.

Gam to midnight

London, central S, SW, NW, central N (England, Wales, Lake District, Isle of Man, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Ayr, Northern Ireland): Prosing fog patches persisting in places, few sunny or clear intervals; wind variable light; max temp 4C (39F).
SE, E England, East Angles: Isolated winny showers near coasts, freezing fog patches, some persisting; a few sunny or clear intervals; wind N light; max temp 3C (37F).
NE England, Borders, Edinburgh, Dundee, Central Highlands: Freezing fog patches at first, rather cloudy, perhaps a little sleet in places later; wind variable light; max temp 4C (39F).
Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Cloudy, light rain in places; wind light becoming moderate southerly; max temp 6C (43F).
Outlook for tomorrow and Sunday: Very little change.

SEA PASSAGES: S North Sea, Strait of Dover: Wind mainly N light or moderate; scattered winny showers; visibility mainly good. C: slight English Channel (E): Wind variable light; fair; visibility mainly good; sea smooth. St George's Channel, Bristol Channel: Wind mainly SE light; fair; visibility mainly good; sea smooth.

Sun rises: 8.03 am
Sun sets: 4.15 pm
Moon sets: 10.46 am
Moon rises: 9.51 pm
Last quarter, January 13.

Lighting-up time

London 4.45 pm to 7.25 am
Bristol 4.25 pm to 7.41 am
Edinburgh 4.24 pm to 8.07 am
Glasgow 4.24 pm to 7.50 am
Penzance 5.13 pm to 7.48 am

Yesterday

Temperatures at midday yesterday: c. about 1 f. air; 1 m. s. sun.
Belfast: c. 2.8
Birmingham: c. 2.8
Bristol: c. 2.8
Cardiff: c. 2.8
Dundee: c. 2.8
Edinburgh: c. 2.8
Glasgow: c. 2.8
Liverpool: c. 2.8
Manchester: c. 2.8
Newcastle: c. 2.8
Nottingham: c. 2.8
Oxford: c. 2.8
Plymouth: c. 2.8
Reading: c. 2.8
Sheffield: c. 2.8
Southampton: c. 2.8
Stoke: c. 2.8
Sunderland: c. 2.8
Tottenham: c. 2.8
Wolverhampton: c. 2.8
Wrexham: c. 2.8

London

Yesterday: Temp: max 8 am to 6 pm, 4C (39F); min 6 pm to 8 am, 1C (34F). Humidity: 8 pm, 82 per cent. Rain: 5 pm to 6 pm, trace. Sea: 5 am to 6 pm, 0.2hr bar, mean sea level, 6 pm, 1,025.5 million rising.

Highest and lowest

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Penzance, 8C (46F). Lowest night temp: York, 1C (34F). Highest highest night temp: Bournemouth, 6.10C (43F). Lowest lowest night temp: Jersey, 6.2hr.

Times world-wide

Noon in London is: 7 am in New York; 4 am in San Francisco; 9 pm in Johannesburg; 4 pm in United Arab Emirates; 3 pm in Karachi; 1 pm in Nigeria; 3 pm in Moscow; 8 pm in Hong Kong.

High tides

Location	AM	PM
London Bridge	4.30	4.15
Aberdeen	4.14	4.14
Abermouth	10.04	10.01
Belfast	4.40	4.40
Cardiff	4.42	4.42
Dundee	4.42	4.42
Falmouth	4.42	4.42
Glasgow	4.42	4.42
Harwich	4.42	4.42
Haywards	4.42	4.42
Leamington	4.42	4.42
Lough	4.42	4.42
Lyons	4.42	4.42
Malpas	4.42	4.42
Marazion	4.42	4.42
Mersey	4.42	4.42
Northfleet	4.42	4.42
Orford	4.42	4.42
Orford Haven	4.42	4.42
Portsmouth	4.42	4.42
Swansea	4.42	4.42
Wexford	4.42	4.42
Woolwich	4.42	4.42
Woolverhampton	4.42	4.42
Worcester	4.42	4.42

Around Britain

Location	Sun	Rain	Max	Min	Cloud
East Coast	0.5	0.5	4	1	Cloudy
West Coast	1.2	1.1	5	1	Cloudy
South Coast	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
North Coast	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
London	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Edinburgh	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Glasgow	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Belfast	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Cardiff	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Dundee	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Falmouth	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Glasgow	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Harwich	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Haywards	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Leamington	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Lough	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Lyons	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Malpas	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Marazion	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Mersey	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Northfleet	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Orford	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Orford Haven	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Portsmouth	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Swansea	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Wexford	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Woolwich	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Woolverhampton	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy
Worcester	0.1	0.1	3	0	Cloudy

Abroad

Location	C	F	W	S	Cloud
Algeria	18	14	10	8	Cloudy
Australia	22	18	14	12	Cloudy
Bahamas	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Bahrain	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Bangladesh	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Barbados	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Belize	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Bermuda	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Bhutan	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Bolivia	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Brazil	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Burkina Faso	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Burundi	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Cameroon	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Canada	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Cape Verde	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Chad	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
China	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Cote d'Ivoire	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Cuba	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Cyprus	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Dominican Republic	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Dominica	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Egypt	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
El Salvador	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Equatorial Guinea	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Eritrea	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Ethiopia	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Fiji	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Ghana	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Guatemala	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Haiti	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Honduras	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Hungary	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Iceland	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
India	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Indonesia	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Iran	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Ireland	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Israel	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Italy	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Jamaica	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Japan	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Jordan	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Kazakhstan	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Kenya	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Korea	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Kuwait	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Laos	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Latvia	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Lebanon	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Lesotho	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Lithuania	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Luxembourg	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Macao	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Madagascar	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Mali	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Malta	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Mauritania	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Mauritius	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Mexico	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Moldova	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Mongolia	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Montenegro	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Morocco	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Mozambique	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Nicaragua	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Niger	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Nigeria	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
North Macedonia	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Oman	28	24	20	18	Cloudy
Pakistan	28				